THE GIRL FROM U.N.C.L.E. ANNUAL

AUTHORISED EDITION
Starring STEPHANIE POWERS as APRIL DANCER
and NOEL HARRISON as MARK SLATE

THE GIRL FROM U.N.C.L.E. ANNUAL

12'6

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DOUBLE TROUBLE FOR APRIL

UNCLE agent, April Dancer, sipped coffee in a pavement café and wondered when THRUSH's move would come. Paris in the spring is a delightful place, but April's secret mission took her mind off the carefree atmosphere, the colourful early-season flowers, and the champagne personality of the gay French capital.

THRUSH's evil activities in France had gained strong momentum and, radiating from Paris, had begun to be more than a nuisance to UNCLE.

"It's not an easy mission, Miss Dancer," Mr. Waverly had warned in the comparative security of a fashionable restaurant in New York. "But I think you're ready to tackle this."

Waverly's sense of fun was odd, to say the least. He knew only too well that April Dancer was one of his top UNCLE agents. In his strange way he was paying April a compliment and she knew it.

"I'll try not to let you down, sir," she responded with a smile.

April was now, some two weeks later, playing the most dangerous game in the world . . . that of a supposed double agent. It seemed incredible even to April, as she sat sipping her coffee, that the bold, audacious move had actually worked.

As she had reported to Mark Slate not more than a couple of hours previously over her short-wave radio link: "Still working okay. So far as I can tell, THRUSH are in no way suspicious."

"Okay, April," called back Mark. "But don't take any chances."

"You can say that again," thought April, as she closed channel D. She knew well enough the grave risks she was taking, but being an UNCLE agent meant a life fraught with danger . . . and she had no complaints.

The remarkable switch had been perfectly executed in the *Rue du Nord*, a narrow cobbled street not more than a half mile from the centre of Montmartre. Madame Charron, the brilliant head of THRUSH's organisation in Paris,

had been taking the short walk from her favourite bistro back to THRUSH's secret headquarters in a lavish suite of offices on one of the main boulevards when three men came out of the shadow of a shop doorway. One pinned her arms by her side; another thrust a thick pad over her mouth to prevent her from raising the alarm, while the third squirted knock-out gas in her face.

In three seconds she was limp and unresisting. At precisely the right moment a taxi, which had been crawling along the kerb, increased speed and pulled up alongside the party. The door was flung open and a girl, looking an exact double of Madame Charron, got out and began walking along the street on her way to THRUSH headquarters. At the same time the three men bundled Madame Charron into the taxi. The door closed on the party and the taxi, increasing speed, rounded a corner and disappeared from sight.

In less than three minutes the switch had been completed. THRUSH's brilliant Madame Charron was a captive of UNCLE. And UNCLE agent April Dancer had taken on her new role.

It was April's harried helper, UNCLE agent Mark Slate who had masterminded the brilliant plan. The two had worked on many UNCLE missions together and had on numerous occasions helped each other out of particularly tough situations.

It all started back in UNCLE's New York headquarters one day, and Mark wished he hadn't said what he said almost before he'd finished saying it.

He, April, and Mr. Waverly were looking at some new film which UNCLE had taken of Madame Charron and the resemblance was so striking that Mark said it even without thinking: "They're so alike she could be April's double."

Waverly picked up the suggestion immediately, though obviously the thought had been in his mind. "So remarkable in fact Mr. Slate, that we should be foolish not to take advantage of this stroke of good fortune." Then he went on with uncanny casualness: "Seeing it's your idea, Mr. Slate, work out a plan for Miss Dancer to take Madame Charron's place."

It had taken an entire week to plan the campaign. Every detail of Madame Charron's movements during that week were plotted and recorded, studied and analysed. At the same time April took a crash course on how to be Madame Charron. She packed three weeks' work into seven days.

Madame Charron was no stranger to UNCLE. Her reputation was well known and UNCLE had a file on her as thick as a bookcase. In fact, she was perhaps the best-documented enemy agent UNCLE had on their books.

"That's a great help," said April in resigned tones as, yet again, she went through a special vocal drill to perfect her French accent. "My, I never knew those old school lessons would come in so handy," she mused.

April's resemblance to Madame Charron had been truly remarkable. UNCLE's make-up men, faced with the problem of adding the finishing touches to the conversion, said: "It's a cinch." They cropped April's shoulder-length hair three inches shorter, put drops in her eyes to dilate

the pupils and, with the aid of durable make-up, slightly built up her cheeks and rounded her chin.

Their job was soon done, but April's was just beginning. She had to learn to walk like Madame Charron, talk like her, act like her, even think like her. And when all that was successfully done, she had to learn about Madame Charron's background, family history, and a welter of incidental information without which April could so easily expose herself as a fraud.

She had been supplied with the layout of THRUSH's Paris headquarters, details of Madame Charron's plans and movements, and information relating to her senior assistants. Consciously, and through the help of electronic suggestion impulses, April learned the mass of information.

And she was ready for the switch when the time came.

April sipped her coffee without regard to its taste. The whole object of UNCLE's clever deception was rapidly drawing to successful realisation . . . or miserable failure. It all depended on the next moves of April Dancer and whether she could successfully come through the supreme test.

April took a deep breath as she thought about it. In a few moments she would meet a THRUSH agent, unknown to her, who would then take her to a secret rendezvous. There she would meet the supreme controller of THRUSH's European activities.

"Golly," thought April, as she drummed her fingers on the table and thought about what was at stake. UNCLE had known for some time that THRUSH, through Madame Charron, were going to attempt a gigantic coup involving almost all THRUSH units throughout Europe. Madame Charron was to be responsible for co-ordinating these activities and was to meet the supreme controller to take over the blueprint of the operation.

"Bonjour!" April jumped as the presence of a man standing at her table brought her back to the realities of the moment.

"I'm sorry if I startled you," he continued. April smiled, as she thought Madame Charron would have done. But then Madame Charron wouldn't have jumped in the first place. Must be careful . . . very careful.

"How long have you been in Paris?" asked the man, sitting down.

"Four years."

"Do you have a large organisation here?"

"About twenty-five people and plenty of ideas."

April knew she was being put through the screening process. The questioning went on. If April answered correctly and did and said nothing to arouse his suspicions the man would be satisfied and would escort her, as planned, to THRUSH's European controller. But one false move; one slight hint. . . .

April concentrated on the questions. Finally, the man smiled. "That seems okay," he said. "It had to be done, of course. Let's go now."

The Girl from UNCLE got up and started on the most dangerous part of her fantastic mission. She was now completely at the mercy of the sinister THRUSH organisation; didn't even know where she was headed. All she could hope was that UNCLE's training had been good and that she had learned her part as Madame Charron perfectly.

A black limousine eased silently alongside them and they got in. After five minutes the car stopped and April and her escort got out. They were at THRUSH headquarters. They went inside, through the intricate maze of corridors and plushly furnished rooms, right into Madame Charron's own office. The wall button was pressed, the door slid away, April was ushered into the office and the door closed behind her. She was on her own with THRUSH's top man in Europe.

He was seated in Madame Charron's swivel chair, heavily masked. He spoke little, though what he said was to the point. His steely eyes glinted through the mask, their gaze

never moving for a split second from April. He watched her every reaction, every expression, every slight movement and mannerism.

"You know why you are here. THRUSH has planned in detail a co-ordinated move involving our agents in almost every country in Europe. This is to be the centre of operations for this plan. You have been chosen to co-ordinate its activities."

His voice was deep and he spoke in unemotional monotone. April paced the office as he spoke—as she knew Madame Charron would have done—and occasionally stroked her right ear lobe with her thumb and forefinger. It was a mannerism for which Madame Charron was well known.

"The details of the plan are contained on this micro-film," continued the controller. From a briefcase he took out a small roll of film and placed it on the desk in front of April. "Take it and look at it," he said.

April smiled to herself. She wasn't to be caught so easily. THRUSH's ingenious system of running checks was a clever one and consisted of various phrases which, when introduced into a conversation, required a set answer. *Take it and look at it* was such a phrase, and when delivered by a superior required only one answer.

April answered confidently: "Do you mean at this moment, sir?"

The controller was well satisfied and April was delighted at her own awareness. Perhaps it was this that led to slight over-confidence . . . for within the next couple of seconds April Dancer, the Girl from UNCLE, had exposed herself as a fraud.

She reached for the film with her right hand, and immediately realised her mistake. Madame Charron had an ugly scar on her right wrist, a relic of an old THRUSH versus UNCLE battle, and she did her best to hide it as, in the early days, she had been self-conscious about it. She got into the habit then, whenever there was a choice, of using her left hand, and the habit had stuck. Oh yes, the scar had been beautifully reproduced on the top of April's wrist, but the very sight of it reminded the controller of Madame Charron's peculiar trait of always using her left hand. And instantly he was suspicious.

April knew she was in a corner; she realised her only chance of survival lay in a surprise attack. With supreme control she gave no hint of knowing she had given herself away.

As the controller's eyes narrowed slightly and he asked to see the micro-film again—"just for a second"—April took a step towards him and raised her hand in a gesture of handing over the film.

Wham! April's attack exploded like a rocket. The cylindrical, heavy paperweight caught the controller square in the face and he staggered backwards.

This gave April the time she needed. She sprang over the desk and with a deft, expert movement, jerked the controller's right hand behind his back and pressed it upwards towards his neck.

He gave a yelp, excruciating pain speeding up his arm as April applied pressure almost to breaking point. Then, as the Girl from UNCLE brought her devastating 'spray deodorant up to his nostrils and squeezed, he slumped to the floor.

April had no time to pat herself on the back. There was a movement outside. The guard on the other side of the office door had evidently heard the scuffle and the controller's yelp of pain and had realised that all was not well.

The door was already opening as April sprang across the room and pressed herself by the wall. As April's escort from the pavement café rushed in, she stuck out a trim foot and he crashed heavily to the thickly carpeted floor. She was on to him almost before he landed, sprayed knock-out gas into his face, and he remained motionless.

April left the office, pressed the button which slid the door closed and then pressed a second button to lock it securely.

"Two down, but plenty to go," she murmured to herself. April knew it would be only a few moments before the general alarm would be given and she raced along the corridor, clutching the valuable micro-film in her left hand. Her miniature pistol nestled snugly in her right palm.

"I've got to get out of here," she whispered to herself. But even as she ran along the corridor on her way to the main exit she knew the scanners

must be on her, and that her desperate effort to loosen herself from the clutches of THRUSH would be plainly on view on the screens in the central control room.

As she raced down the corridor her escape route was suddenly blocked when an emergency door fifty yards ahead dropped into place, sealing off the passage.

She turned and made to go round by a secondary route, but three THRUSH agents were in pursuit. She flattened to the wall as a shot echoed as it ricocheted off the wall a foot in front of her. She replied from the small firearm nestled in the palm of her hand, and an advancing agent spun round, winged in the shoulder.

The two remaining THRUSH agents were only ten yards away. As they advanced towards her they seemed to collide, and the two of them crashed to the floor. Then they scrambled to their feet and, to April's utter astonishment, one of the men brought both his fists down mightily on the back of the neck of the second man, who crumbled to the floor.

The THRUSH agent who had administered the blow sprang to April's side and wrenched the roll of micro-film from her clenched fist.

"No time to explain," he panted. "But I'm from UNCLE. Give me the film. You take this secret passage. It leads directly to the foyer."

He pressed the nearby wall with the tips of his forefingers and a slab of wall pivoted to reveal a long, narrow corridor. April, astonished, stepped through and the wall closed behind her.

She wasted no time and in under three minutes was at the end of the long corridor. She felt around the wall for the door mechanism. After a few seconds there was a slight click, a low hum, and the door swung on its axis. April, luckily, stepped through with great caution for the door hadn't finished closing behind her when she sensed a movement to the left and there was a menacing swish as a long knife flashed within inches of her head.

She flung herself full length to the floor, then turned over just in time to see a second blow coming towards her. Timing her move brilliantly, the Girl from UNCLE rolled to her left slightly, and the knife was driven into the thick pile carpeting. Immediately April's left foot came up and caught her assailant a crippling blow to the pit of the stomach.

He winced, but April hadn't done with him yet. That surprise attack as she came through the door had almost caught her napping, and she didn't take kindly to anyone who brought her as close to a sticky end as this guy had done. As he doubled up she straightened him again with a two-fisted hook to the face and as he staggered backwards she helped him on his way with a foot-thrust to his chest. He finished up in a crumpled heap ten yards away. It would be a few hours before he was much use to THRUSH again.

"April . . . April . . . quick. Move, girl."

The voice came from the entrance, where the THRUSH agent who had helped her was standing with the plate-glass door open. She rushed to him and together they clambered into a waiting car. As the car accelerated down the road a group of excited THRUSH agents rushed out of the building to gather, helpless, on the pavement.

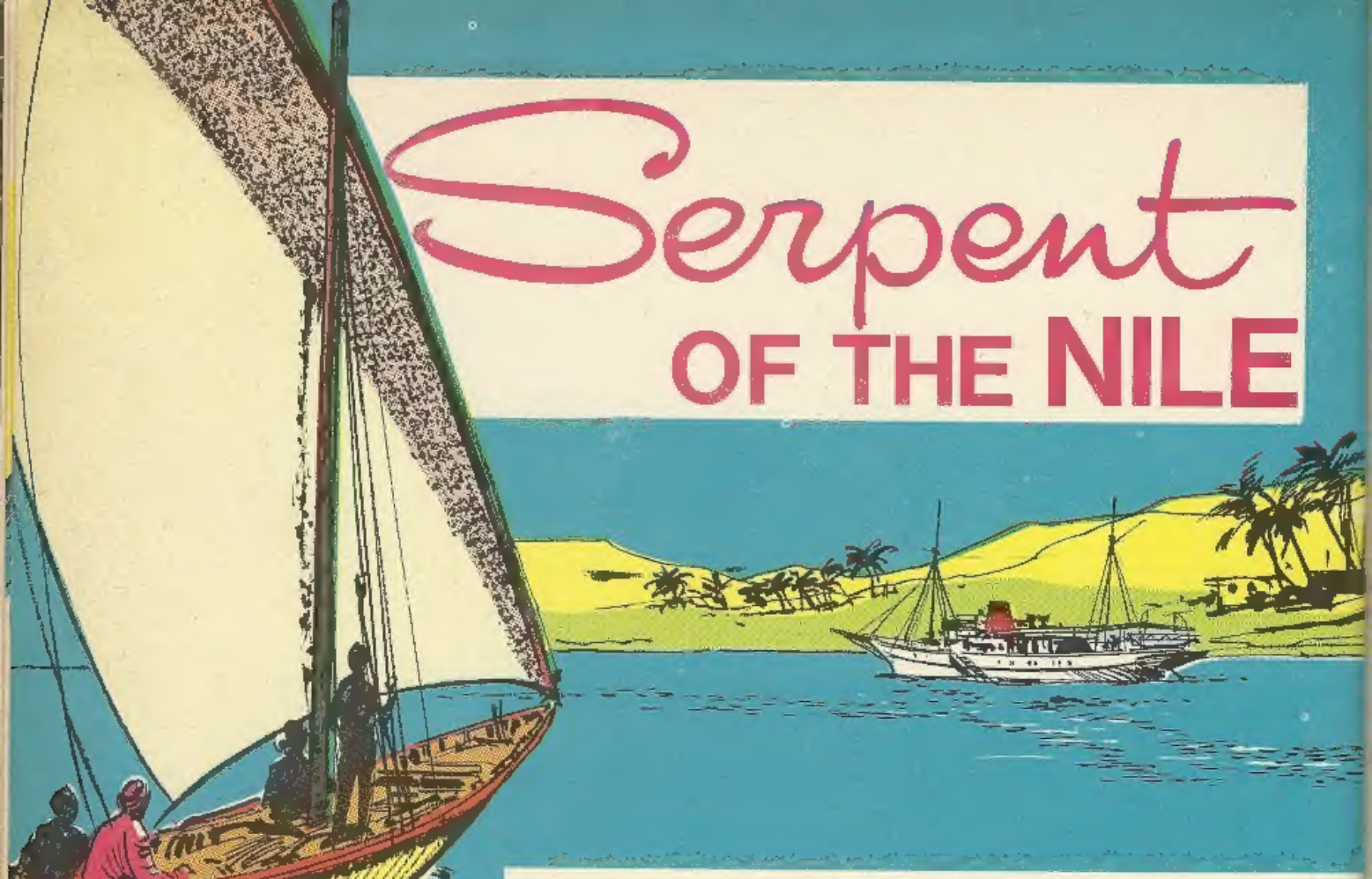
The great gamble had come off. April Dancer was the Girl from UNCLE again—or would be by the time her hair had grown that extra three inches—the micro-film exposing THRUSH's projected European offensive was in the hands of UNCLE and, knowing that, THRUSH wouldn't dare to act on it.

"When you are sent on a mission, Miss Dancer, I expect you to keep me fully informed. Remember that in future, please." It was Mr. Waverly talking at a *post-mortem* on the Paris mission.

"I'm sorry, sir, but it really was very difficult and there was so little time," explained April. "Perhaps I might have had a little more time and felt more relaxed if I'd known that Mark Slate here would be with me, disguised as a THRUSH agent. I very nearly coshed him when he grabbed that micro-film."

"Incidentally, April, why didn't you?"

"That ugly mug of yours, darling Mark. I recognised it . . . even under all that make-up. . . ."



Serpent OF THE NILE

A BREATH of wind caught the triangular lateen sails of the Egyptian felucca and carried the little boat through the waters of the Nile. The two Egyptian oarsmen shipped their oars and hauled on the mainsheets. The helmsman grinned as he steadied the tiller.

"We have plenty wind now, mister", he called. "You want to stay out all day? It's very nice, yes?"

Mark Slate braced himself by holding the shroud lines supporting the foremast.

"I'll think about it," he said. "Just keep her heading upstream."

"Yes, mister. I'll show you very good sights up river."

Mark turned to April Dancer, his pretty companion who was leaning her back against the foremast.

"You can put away that photograph, now," he said jealously. "You've been gawking at him ever since we came on this job."

April sighed. "But you must admit, he's absolutely gorgeous. He's like a Greek god."

"That, my dear April, is Alexandrios Kyprenios, who is undoubtedly a murderer, criminal, or enemy agent, and probably all three in one. Why do you think we were sent here to keep an eye on him? Not to give us a holiday, that's for sure."

"He doesn't look like a criminal to me."

"Face the facts, April. Suddenly a rich, handsome man sails his luxurious barge up the Nile, and throws lavish parties for diplomats, ambassadors, and high-ranking military and civil service experts. Where does he come from? Nobody knows. He is apparently a millionaire several times over, yet nobody's ever heard of him. Very fishy, if you ask me. Just because he's a man, he's completely turned your head. I don't know why UNCLE sent you on this mission."

"Because I'm a woman. Perhaps I'll turn his head too."

"That's what I call wishful thinking," Mark snorted. "This Kyprenios guy is dangerous, and the sooner you

get that into your pretty head, the better."

The felucca was going really well now. It cut across a bend in the broad river. Mark put his binoculars to his eyes, adjusted the focus, and nudged April.

"There she is," he said. "Sixty feet of luxury."

April took the binoculars and peered at the white and gold barge anchored in mid-river. A gaily coloured awning covered the after-deck to protect the occupants from the glare of the African sun.

"She is beautiful," said April.

"We've travelled 5,000 miles to see this baby." Mark turned to the old helmsman. "Keep in midstream 'til we reach the next bend, then double back close to that barge."

"You no want to see ancient temples, and giant statues, no?"

"No," said Mark. "I've seen them all back home in the museum."

The helmsman was disappointed.

"Mark," said April anxiously, handing him the binoculars, "take another look at that barge."

Mark looked. "Gee! Somebody's watching us from the front cabin with a telescope." He put his binoculars out of sight.

"That's what I thought. Still, we haven't done anything any other tourist would not do, so we can hardly rouse their suspicions."

"A guy like Kyprenios is always suspicious. I warned you he is dangerous. Keep your eye on the barge, but act normally."

As the felucca sped upstream, the warm, dry, fresh wind gently ruffled April's hair. The brilliant sun, set in the deepest blue sky, turned the panoramic scenery to colours so vivid they made her eyes ache. The fields and palm trees along the reddish brown river appeared the greenest in the world. The desert sands were torrents of gold. The buildings cast purple shadows. In such magnificent scenery, April's heart should have been filled with wonder. Instead, it was thumping with excitement.

"Okay, turn her about and come as close to the barge as you can," ordered Mark. He snuggled up to April. "We might as well see as much as we can."

The felucca hands dropped the main lateen sail and set the other on the aft mast to steady the boat on her new course. The felucca drifted with the tide to clear the barge on the starboard side.

"We've crossed her bows now," said Mark, "clear of the cabin where we saw the telescope. Now we'll see if Mr. Kyprenios is still suspicious." Mark raised his binoculars but quickly lowered them again. "I don't like this, April. Someone's watching us from the bridge now."

April said nothing. She sat with Mark in the bow of the felucca as their boat closed in on the barge. They could see her in detail now. There was a native deckhand painting the short bowsprit of the barge, hanging precariously on a rope beneath the figurehead.

"I can't see any sign of your Greek hero," said Mark casually.

The felucca was well within gentle hailing distance now; but apart from the deckhand below the bowsprit, there was no sign of life on the barge. Suddenly April jumped to her feet.

"He's going to fall," she screamed, pointing to the deckhand.

The man dropped his paint-pot. He let go of his brush and grabbed the rope with both hands. For a moment he swung on the rope, yelled and slipped, then dropped into the water.

"Help me, help me!" he yelled at the English-speaking tourists.

In a flash, Mark climbed on the gunwales and dived into the Nile. April looked anxiously around for the crocodiles which were said to be notorious in these parts. There were none in sight and Mark managed to cover the thirty yards to the floundering native before he went under. Then with an arm around the man's neck, Mark floated with him alongside the barge. Three men appeared on deck and helped the swimmers aboard.

One of the men was Alexandrios Kyprenios, the dark-haired, blue-eyed man April had been sent to investigate. He seemed little more than twenty, yet he was more attractive than his picture could ever portray. In spite of the heat he was well-dressed. Indeed his white jacket was cut so expertly it could have been tailored in London.

"Abdul, take Ahmed below," he instructed another native sailor, "and dry him out. Give him a tot of rum if he needs one."

"Yes, master," answered the one who was called Abdul.

"My dear fellow," said Alexandrios, taking Mark's elbow. "I must thank you for saving Ahmed. Come below and let me provide you with a set of dry clothes."

The men disappeared below.

"Lower the sail," April ordered her crew, "and close in on the barge."

"Yes, miss," said the helmsman, touching his forehead.

He swung the tiller across. The felucca responded and gently bumped the fend-offs protecting the barge. The other two felucca hands took in the sail and dropped anchor. April looked up on deck and saw Alexandrios reappear. He came to the side and held out his hand.

"My dear lady," he said politely. "Let me help you aboard."

"Thank you."

April took his strong, young hands and climbed up to the deck of the barge. As Alexandrios bent over the side to help her, his white jacket slipped forward and inside she saw

he wore a shoulder holster in which rested a German Luger automatic pistol.

"This unfortunate incident must have been an awful shock to you. Won't you sit down?" He indicated a comfortable leather chair set on the after-deck. After she sat down, he sat opposite her.

"Lucky we were passing at the time."

"It certainly was. I'd hate to lose Ahmed to the river crocodiles. He's a good man."

"I was surprised he couldn't swim."

Alexandrios laughed but did not reply. He had an engaging smile and a set of near perfect teeth. April wanted to ask him if he had ever considered going into films, but he continued before she could put her question.

"Your friend, what's his name. . . ?"

"Mark, Mark Slate."

"Yes, Mark. He's a very brave man I've offered him the use of my bathroom and a set of towels and dry clothes, but I can't thank him enough for saving Ahmed."

"Don't worry," said April. "I'm sure he's thrilled to be of service."

"He's below now, cleaning up. You say you're tourists."

"Er, y . . . yes," said April. "Are you?"

Alexandrios laughed. "Well, yes, sort of. As a matter of fact," he confided, "I'm a student of engineering. Are you interested in engineering?"

"What sort of engineering?"

"Oh, things like reservoirs. . . ?"

April shook her head

"Dams?" said Alexandrios slowly. "Don't dams mean anything to you?"

April shook her head again. "No, why should they?" she asked innocently. "I prefer ancient temples and pyramids any day to ugly old dams."

Alexandrios laughed. "Of course, my dear lady. Would you like some champagne whilst we wait for your friend?"

April pretended to be annoyed "What's all this 'dear lady' business? You make me feel like an old maid."

"I'm dreadfully sorry," his blue eyes clouded.

"My name's April Dancer, and I'd love some champagne."

Alexandrios brightened. He snapped his fingers to call his steward. The steward wore a fez and a one-piece garment, but his skin was much darker than that of an Egyptian native. He had three scars cut into each cheek, in the fashion of certain Sudanese tribes.

"Champagne, Kemel, if you please, with three glasses."

"Yes, sir," said the steward. He disappeared below.

"My name is Alexandrios. Alexandrios Kyprenios."

"Greek?" asked April bluntly.

Alexandrios was silent for a moment. "Cypriot," he corrected.

Kemel brought the champagne in an ice bucket. Alexandrios uncorked the bottle and poured the sparkling liquid into two of the glasses.

"I hope you'll have a happy holiday in Egypt," he toasted.

When Mark had changed, he was invited to join April and Alexandrios in a glass of champagne. Alexandrios seemed a little disappointed when Mark confessed he too was not particularly interested in dams; but still he was very kind. He told them all

the best tourist attractions in Egypt and as they were leaving, he loaned them a set of guide books.

"What do you think of him?" April asked as they pulled away in their boat.

"Complete phoney, without a doubt," said Mark bluntly. "You know when I 'rescued' that fellow, Ahmed? He turned over on his back so that I could life-save him. If he was really in danger of drowning, he would have grabbed me as tightly as he could, you know that. That fellow Ahmed can swim as well as I can."

"I noticed Alexandrios carried a Luger in a shoulder holster."

"Yeah, and he tried to say he was a student of engineering."

April smiled. "Nevertheless, I still think he's absolutely gorgeous," she teased.

April and Mark stood on the terraced veranda of their hotel and gazed over the moonlit Nile to the lights of the luxurious barge set against the shimmering waters. The radio transceiver buzzed in April's handbag. In a seemingly eternal female gesture, she opened her handbag, took out her lipstick, and from the lipstick capsule which housed her miniaturised radio, she pulled out a short aerial.

"Auntie Dancer here," she called.

"Listen, Miss Dancer," it was Mr. Waverly's voice from UNCLE headquarters. "We have some information for you. We've just heard that someone is going to blow up the old Aswan dam on the night of the sixteenth–seventeenth when the water is at its highest. I want you to find out if there's any connection between this and Mr. Kyprenios."

Mark snatched April's lipstick capsule. "I'll say there is," he called excitedly. "This Kyprenios guy is interested in dams right enough."

"And what you said in your last report confirms my suspicions," went on the faint voice from the radio "You must stop this sabotage at all costs. If you don't, the whole of the lower Nile valley will be flooded. Thousands of people will be drowned or die afterwards from starvation Egypt's economy will be ruined, and the country will be exposed to attack by an enemy, and Egypt has plenty of enemies in the Middle East. You understand the seriousness of the situation, don't you?"

"We sure do," said Mark.

"Right! How you deal with the situation I'll leave to you. However, there must be no slip up."

"We understand, Mr. Waverly."

"Good. Report back in two hours. Out!"

Mark pushed back the aerial into the lipstick capsule. "What did I tell you?" he said to April.

April returned her lipstick to her handbag

"I told you this Kyprenios guy was dangerous. We've got to have a show down with him before it's too late. Ah, don't be glum, April. This guy's a fiend. He's better off out of the way."

April sighed. "I suppose so," she said. "What are you going to do?"

"Go right after him. It will take me ten minutes to swim to the barge. This mystery will be cleared up inside an hour."

"Be careful, Mark."

"Don't worry, April. I've handled criminals before." Mark squeezed her shoulder and walked away quickly to his hotel room.

April looked out of her hotel window. Across the shimmering Nile she could see the lights of the barge anchored in midstream. By now Mark would be swimming through those waters, with flippers on his feet and a sheath knife in his belt. She shuddered and tried to interest herself in a guide book, but she could not concentrate After an hour, she saw the barge sail upstream. She waited another hour, but Mark did not return. Anxiously, she reported to UNCLE headquarters.

"This looks very serious," said the voice of Mr. Waverly. "Are you sure you've given Mark enough time to return?"

"Plenty," said April. "The barge has been gone for over an hour now, and there's no sign of Mark."

"And you think the barge is heading for the dam?"

"It's going upstream."

"Well, Miss Dancer, I want you to catch a train to Aswan and book a hotel room overlooking the dam. Report anything unusual immediately. I'll send another agent at once."

"Yes, Mr. Waverly." April switched off her transceiver and began to pack her suitcase. She was worried about Mark. He had not contacted her by radio for over two hours. Wherever he was, he must be in serious trouble . . . if he was alive.

April caught a train to Aswan and booked a room in an hotel from which she could see the luxury barge anchored in the shadow of the dam. April was worried. The agent UNCLE had promised to send had not arrived. Alexandrios could blow up the dam and there was no one to stop him. The radio buzzed in her handbag

"Hello, Miss Dancer," said Mr. Waverly. "Where are you now?"

"In the Hotel Phoenicia, overlooking the dam."

"Can you see Kyprenios?"

"He's in the barge. Incidentally, he and his men have thoroughly inspected the dam from all directions, and the banks of the river around the dam. I'm sure they're up to something."

"I know. Listen, Miss Dancer. Our agent has been delayed at Malta. He won't arrive in Egypt until tomorrow morning."

"But it will be too late then," cried April desperately.

"I know, I know. You are the only one now who can save the dam I want you to stop Kyprenios. This will mean that you may have to shoot him. We prefer to give these jobs to our men, but in these circumstances, you are the only one to do it. The lives of thousands of people depend on you. Can you do it, Miss Dancer?"

April breathed deeply. Although she had been trained to kill, she had never killed a man before. "I have no choice, have I?"

"I'm afraid not, Miss Dancer. He's a very dangerous man. Remember, Mark disappeared without a trace."

"I'll do it."

"Report back when you've done it. We'll be listening out."

April switched off her radio and took her automatic pistol out of her handbag. She screwed a silencer on the end of the short barrel and loaded six cartridges into the hilt. These lead bullets, she thought, would soon push out the life of the man who was undoubtedly the handsomest she had seen. She peered through her bedroom curtains at the barge at anchor. The sun was low on the horizon, and the Egyptian sky was scarlet. April slipped the gun into her handbag and left the room.

She saw Alexandrios come ashore with Ahmed, Kemel and Abdul, so she slipped behind a grove of palm trees to watch them. Alexandrios looked at his watch.

"It's nearly night," he said to his companions. "I'll be glad when this job is over."

The four men walked to the side of the dam, chatted for a moment, then split up. The two Egyptians walked across the dam, and Alexandrios moved a few yards up the river where he stopped among a pile of boulders and slipped into the purple shadows. Kemel walked farther up the bank of the river until he, too, disappeared in a grove of palms.

April worked her way behind Alexandrios, keeping out of sight. By now the sun was on the horizon. African twilights are very short, and she knew it would soon be dark. She had only a few moments of daylight left. Though she could not see Alexandrios in the shadows, she knew exactly where he was. In the last moment before night fell, she took out her automatic and steadied her hand on a rock as she had been trained to do. She had given him as long to live as she dared. She pointed her automatic into the black shadows between two boulders. Her victim was an easy target, only thirty yards away. She aimed carefully and squeezed the trigger.

Her automatic kicked back viciously as the bullet hissed through the silencer. Alexandrios jumped up,

she could see his silhouette against the red sky. He let out a faint cry and dropped back into the shadows

April closed her eyes. Secret agency work is a dirty business. She made up her mind to resign as soon as she returned home.

But she had to make sure Alexandrios was dead before dealing in turn with his men. Perhaps he was only injured, in which case she would have to put him out of his misery. That was humane. But if he was injured, then like a tiger, he would be vicious. Cautiously she crept through the shadows to the pile of boulders.

Suddenly the muzzle of a Luger was thrust into her neck. "Hold it," said a man's voice. A cry stuck in her throat as she recognised Alexandrios

"Oh, it's you," he said, slipping his Luger back into its holster. "What are you trying to do, kill somebody?" For a moment he turned his back on her as he stepped into the shadows. He pulled her down beside him. "Anybody can see you for miles. And put away that gun before you kill me."

"You're not going to blow up that dam, are you?"

"D'you think I would be sitting here if I was?"

April put away her gun "But somebody is . . ."

"I know. Some international arms-manufacturing group of companies, I believe. They're also planning similar action in Israel, hoping to start a war in the Midle East so that they can make a million pound fortune."

"But what about Mark, Mark Slate?"

"That young hothead. I rolled him in a carpet, like Cleopatra, and sent him ashore for a couple of days. He will be quite comfortable, I assure you. More comfortable than I am, at present."

"But I'm an UNCLE agent too."

"Darn it," said Alexandrios, feeling his ribs. A large red bloodstain, as big as a saucer, spread over his shirt. "Why didn't you learn cooking?"

"You *are* injured. Let me help you."

"You keep your hands off me. You've caused enough trouble already. I'll last until morning." He coughed, and leaned his head back against the rock. His breathing was shallow. "It beats me how they plan to blow up the dam," he said slowly. "I've had a good look round, but I can't see any signs of explosives."

He did not look at April His eyes were concentrated on the water piled up behind the dam

"I'm sorry about the shooting. Can't I do something for you?"

"Forget it." He turned, smiling at her, and patted her hand. "It was an accident." Suddenly he clutched her arm. "Can you see anything across there?" He pointed at the river.

April looked and saw two men dressed in black rubber suits appear from the Nile.

"Frogmen! I might have guessed. Obviously they have laid a charge against the dam. I must stop them," Alexandrios muttered.

Alexandrios drew his Luger and pulled himself up by the boulder. Bent almost double, and clutching his injured side, he ran into the open.

"Stay where you are!" he challenged the two frogmen.

One frogman tried to pull a gun. Alexandrios immediately shot him. The other frogman dropped behind the body of his companion. A gun battle flared up. Alexandrios dropped to his knees but still continued firing April steadied her automatic pistol and fired. The saboteur rolled over until he stopped with his face half submerged in the river

Alexandrios walked two paces towards the bodies, staggered and collapsed on the sand. April ran to him and raised his head. Blood trickled out of his mouth. That was bad. The sign of a serious internal injury.

"April," croaked Alexandrios. "Tell Kemel the dam is mined. Get him to remove the fuses. He can use the frogmen's cylinders."

"Don't worry about that. Let me help you first."

"But hurry, April, hurry. There isn't much time."

April wiped the blood from his face. "Who are you, Alexandrios?"

"I'm . . ." His voice was no more than a whisper. April had to bend her face to his lips to hear. "I'm a British agent, April. Trust me. . . !"

April squeezed his hand. "I trust you, Alexandrios. I have always trusted you."

"Hurry, April . . ." Alexandrios tried to say another word, but all that came out of his mouth was another trickle of blood. His head dropped back. No longer could she feel his faint breath on her cheek. He was dead.

April laid his head gently on the sand as Kemel came running up.

"I heard shooting." He bent over Alexandrios and shook him by the shoulder. "Alex, Alex. . . ."

Kemel got no reply and burst into a flood of tears.

"He said the dam has been charged with explosives," said April. "We must remove the fuses before the whole lot explodes."

Kemel sobbed bitterly. He wiped his wet face with the bottom of his gown. April knew she must do the job herself.

"You may unfasten your safety harnesses now," called the voice of the air stewardess. "You may smoke. Ashtrays are provided in the arms of your seats."

The mighty VC10 airliner gently adjusted its rate of climb. April turned her head away from the aircraft window and the misty seascape below. Mark squeezed her arm.

"You did a great job, April. Thousands of people alive today owe everything they've got to you. Why, if you hadn't removed that fuse from the two tons of explosive stacked against the dam, the whole lot would have gone off. A huge crack would have been ripped in the dam; then, with the total weight of the waters of the upper Nile, the fissure would have been torn open. The stored-up waters would have burst through the breach, and bored down the Nile valley like an avalanche. You did a great job, April."

April pulled the photograph from her handbag, but she could not see it from her tear-filled eyes. But Mark did not tease her.

"He was a great guy," he said gently.

April nodded. Her lips quivered. "Yes, he was a great guy."

File Number	U. N. G. A. 17337/225

CONFIDENTIAL FILE ON U.N.C.L.E. AGENTS

APRIL DANCER AND MARK SLATE

TOP SECRET

THIS DOCUMENT MUST NOT BE REMOVED

PROPERTY OF UNITED NETWORK COMMAND FOR LAW AND ENFORCEMENT

NO UNAUTHORISED PERSONS ALLOWED ACCESS TO THIS FILE WITHOUT THE EXPRESS AUTHORITY OF MR. ALEXANDER WAVERLY

PERSONAL FILE ON U.N.C.L.E. AGENT 17225

AGENT'S NAME — April Dancer
SEX — Female
AGE — Twenty-three
BIRTHPLACE — Maine USA
MARITAL STATE — Single

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Hair — Raven
Eyes — Brown
Height — 5' 5"

INTERESTS — Bullfighting, clay pigeon shooting, dancing, skiing, yoga languages

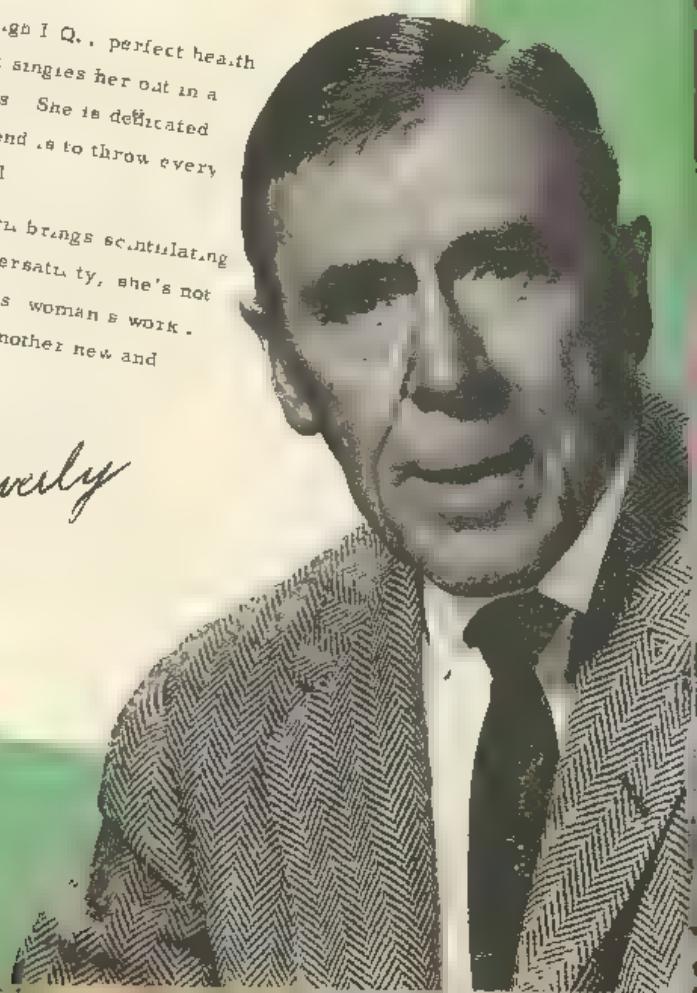
HEALTH — Excellent

I.Q. — Very high

Miss Dancer, like all U.N.C.L.E. agents has a high I.Q., perfect health and absolute emotional stability. But the quality that singles her out in a crowd is something I might call her positive dynamics. She is dedicated to good works and her method of effecting this end is to throw every molecule of her being into the fight against cosmic evil.

An honours graduate of the U.N.C.L.E. academy, April brings scintillating animal vitality to every job she's assigned. With her versatility, she's not limited only to jobs that ordinarily would be classified as woman's work. She is on general assignment, a full working partner of another new and outstanding U.N.C.L.E. agent, Mark Slate.

Alexander Waverly



PERSONAL FILE ON U.N.C.L.E. AGENT 17337

AGENT S NAME	Mark Slate
SEX	Male
AGE	Twenty-six
BIRTHPLACE	London, England
MARITAL STAIE	Single

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Hair	Light Brown
Eyes	Hazel
Height	5 9

INTERESTS — Gadgets good food good living, pretty girls skiing and folk-singing

HEALTH — Excellent

I. Q. — Very high

It s really not my place to assay and comment on a fellow U N. C. L. E. agent . . but, since you ask, I must tell you he s not my cup of tea Not that he isn t bright enough. I m sure he ranked right up at the top of his qualification examination. He's rather brash for my taste, though, pushy in a nice way And, if you ll permit my saying so, sometimes unkempt Not that I m excessively fastidious about my own person, either. But he could get more frequent haircuts And striped ties with check coats . . . really, I ask you.

But I must admit that Mark is resourceful . . and courageous. A trifle casual about his preparation and a bit cavalier about his briefing, however Not that it has ever affected his performance which, I grant you, is outstanding on every mission. Really, I suppose, it s nothing more than the fact that I m just a bit more serious about my job than he is.

Illya Kuryakin

Mexican THRUSH Dance

THE sun blazed down mercilessly and the desert road was quiet in the intense stillness of midday in Mexico. But a couple of miles away the temperature was even hotter as the open jeep kicked up clouds of dust, the speedometer touching eighty. Three hundred yards behind, the long black sedan with its six muscular he-men occupants, raced along in pursuit.

T-t-t-a-t-t-a-t . . . the bullet hit the bodywork of the jeep and ricocheted away to be lost in the parched growth by the roadside.

"Keep it going, Mark. They're close behind." It was a natural enough comment from April Dancer, the Girl from UNCLE, but it wasn't much help to Mark Slate, her harried helper from the international organisation. His foot was flat down on the accelerator . . . and even this souped-up jeep couldn't be urged into much greater speed.

As April looked round, the black sedan was lost in the mountain of dust being kicked up by the jeep. She took a small gun out of her trouser pocket and shot into the cloud.

"You never know, Mark. It's worth a try," she said in answer to his look of amazement.

Mark gripped the steering wheel hard and the jeep bounced and jerked over the rough, jagged road. The sleek limousine was gaining steadily and Mark and April knew it. In another five, perhaps eight minutes at the most, the low, black six-seater would be alongside.

"What's the plan, Mark?" inquired April, philosophically.

Mark had been twisting his gaze from left to right over the arid ground on either side of the dust road, hoping that something, somewhere, might give him an idea. "I think we might have to jump for it. You know the drill, so when I give the word, hitch up your pants and out you go."

April, her long hair blowing back in the wind, smiled at Mark's picturesque language. Both were hot and sticky under the heat of the Mexican sun and the tension of the chase, and they had discarded their jackets. April wore her white trousers and a crisp shirt, with matching cap, while Mark had on trousers and sweat shirt. Both wore sun glasses.

More shots hit the ground just behind the speeding jeep. A couple seared into the dust road alongside, and two in quick succession hit the bodywork with a metallic twang.

Mark shot a quick glance behind to see the wide, gleaming grille of the pursuing car now not more than two hundred yards behind. He must keep going. It was imperative that he kept this THRUSH sextet fully occupied for as long as possible. While they were in pursuit of April and Mark they were leaving THRUSH's local headquarters undermanned . . . and that was just what April, Mark and UNCLE wanted.

In this sun-scorched area of Mexico the fight between UNCLE, the United Network Command for Law Enforcement, and its antagonist THRUSH, the world-wide organisation opposed to UNCLE's law-abiding principles, was fierce. THRUSH had established well-equipped headquarters close to one of the small townships and it was important to UNCLE that this headquarters be destroyed.

"What an assignment!" exclaimed April Dancer as Mr. Waverly, back in New York a couple of days earlier, had explained their death-defying mission. April and Mark Slate were to go to Mexico, penetrate THRUSH headquarters to such an extent as to draw off a number of THRUSH's agents, thereby leaving the headquarters understaffed for UNCLE to attack.

So far the plot had worked like a charm. UNCLE's intelligence had been good, the headquarters hadn't taken a great deal of finding, and it wasn't long before April and Mark were being hotly pursued.

Now, as the jeep careered madly along the road, almost airborne at times, April held on grimly with her left hand and pulled out her miniature radio from her pocket with the other.

"Open channel D, please."

"Yes, Miss Dancer, what is it?" inquired Waverly with his casual aplomb.

"Assignment going according to plan, sir," reported April. "We located THRUSH headquarters, drew six of their men away and are now about twenty-five miles from the headquarters location."

"Good work," came back Waverly. "You've done well."

April shot a look behind her and wondered how the situation could possibly be described as well when THRUSH were so near to them. She looked at Mark, smiled a weak smile, and answered simply into the radio: "Yes, sir."

Mr. Waverly then inquired their present position.

April explained the situation.

"It appears that emergency action may well be necessary soon, Miss Dancer. Tell Mr. Slate that I shouldn't delay too long . . . and do keep reporting in, Miss Dancer."

"At a time like this he wants reports," thought April. But she merely said: "Very good sir."

"We've got to make our move soon, April," asserted Mark. "We can't afford to let them get *too* near."

To the right Mark could see some scorched vegetation which would afford a little cover. Quickly he decided "I'll swing off the road there," he told April. "That'll give us time to get out and take cover behind the jeep. We can keep them at bay for a while."

He eased his foot back off the accelerator, and then pulled hard on the wheel. The jeep shuddered and nearly catapulted over, but somehow at least two wheels kept to the road and the vehicle remained upright.

But then Mark and April looked ahead in horror. Not twenty yards away the ground fell away sharply into a deep gorge. Mark stamped hard on the brakes. The jeep slung round at the back as the rear wheels locked and the back half of the jeep slid from side to side over the rough road.

They wouldn't make it, and both April and Mark knew it.

Even as Mark shouted "Jump, April" the resourceful Girl from UNCLE had already got to her feet and was poised to spring out.

They jumped almost simultaneously . . . and three seconds later the jeep crashed over the edge and somersaulted down the steep, jagged slope, breaking its back on the way.

"Okay, April?"

"Okay, Mark," came back the reassuring answer.

"Good girl. Quick, behind the shrubbery."

April and Mark had barely taken cover when the THRUSH car screeched into view and rocked to a standstill by the edge of a sheer drop. Its occupants surged out of all doors and looked over the edge.

The jeep lay broken fifty feet below and April and Mark heard one of the gang say: "Guess that's the end of that." The THRUSH agents turned back to the car.

"What'll we do, Mark?" whispered April. "If they go back now, they'll foul up UNCLE's plan. They'll be back far too early, before there has been time to blow up the THRUSH headquarters."

"We've got to keep them busy for a bit longer, April," agreed Mark. Both UNCLE agents had their guns in their hands "You take the front tyre, I'll take the back."

"Just as you say," responded April. "After three . . ."

Both peered through their dark glasses. Mark whispered, "One . . . two . . . three." The shots echoed around the emptiness of the area. Both were on target and the front and rear offside tyres of the THRUSH vehicle were flat to the rim in a couple of seconds.

The THRUSH party wheeled round, shattered by the swift movement. April and Mark shot a quick glance of satisfaction at the car, turned to one another, shook hands and smiled.

But then they crouched lower as a couple of shots hit the ground close to them. One of the THRUSH agents had shown his anger by blazing off a couple of rounds into the scorched shrub behind which April and Mark were crouched.

"Okay. Come out slowly, with your hands high." The voice was deep and gruff . . . and meant what it said The UNCLE girl and boy got to their feet, stepped out from their sketchy cover and walked slowly towards their captors.

"Get in." April and Mark made for the car. Two of THRUSH's men were round the back of the car, negotiating the one spare wheel; two others were making their way round the other side of the car

Now was the time for a bit of fun, and April and Mark sensed it. Together they made their moves. April ducked double and jerked the feet forward of the THRUSH agent standing guard behind her. He crashed heavily, his gun falling to the ground. At the same time, Mark jerked both elbows down and back to catch his THRUSH agent a punishing blow in the stomach. As the man buckled, Mark turned swiftly, knocked the gun from his trailing hand, and Mark smiled as he saw his opponent sink to the ground.

It was a spirited action, but the UNCLE pair were still outnumbered. Even before Mark could turn to make his next move, there was a crushing blow to the back of his head and he went down like a stone. April, by this time herself overpowered by a couple of THRUSH agents—though still struggling furiously—was unable to help and was pushed roughly into the back of the car. As something was thrust in front of her face and pressed there, consciousness faded and she knew no more.

April blinked her eyes open. The interior of the car steadied as her eyes and mind cleared, and she could see that the car was different THRUSH had obviously replaced the punctured car with a second one, sent out from their headquarters.

Mark was still unconscious, but in a few moments he murmured and he too opened a rather vacant pair of eyes.

As they focused on the surroundings, April looked over and gave him a welcoming smile. They were both in the back of the car, supervised by one of the THRUSH henchmen. A THRUSH agent was driving and another sat by his side in the passenger seat. The other three must have returned to headquarters by the original or another car.

April and Mark took a few moments to get to grips with their surroundings; but then their alert minds and thoroughly expert training automatically brought their thoughts back to the next move. April winked at Mark, who smiled gently in return.

The next UNCLE action started innocently enough. April, pretending to be in need of freshening up following her enforced knock-out, rubbed her face vigorously with her hands and then, spiking any potential objection from her captors, said: "Gosh I must look awful. Better tidy myself up a bit"

"Watch it, lady," came a gruff retort from the THRUSH escort sitting by her side.

In reply April smiled and brought a small comb from her pocket. She tidied her hair and then returned the comb. All the time, Mark watched intently.

April next pulled out what looked

like a lipstick case. She brought it in proximity to her face. The THRUSH guard watched her closely, but the action was typically feminine and looked innocent enough. But then, in a flash, he must have realised the resourcefulness of April. She unscrewed the top of the case, as if to expose the lipstick, and then in an instant pointed it at the driver.

A hypodermic dart not more than 1½ inches long shot from the barrel and lodged itself in the back of the driver's neck. Almost immediately he slumped to one side.

At the same time Mark made his move. His strong hands encircled the chin and face of the passenger in the front seat and he exerted great pressure, forcing the THRUSH agent's head well back. Then, maintaining the backward pressure, he slipped one hand round the back of the neck and forced it forward. In ten seconds resistance had faded and Mark's opponent slumped forward. In the meantime, April was trying some specialised judo on the remaining THRUSH agent, sitting by her side in the rear seat. She rammed her right boot hard into his shin, and thrust her elbow point deep into the pit of his stomach.

But the car, though slowing down, was still travelling fast and was, by now, well out of control. It had left the road and was bucking crazily over the open, barren countryside.

As April finished off her specialised tactics with a sidehand chop to the neck, Mark vaulted over the front seat and in a second brought the car under control

"Phew . . . a near thing, Mark my boy," she said.

Mark just smiled. "Well done, April," he replied.

Mark took out his pencil-type radio link unit and spoke to the other UNCLE men marshalled outside THRUSH's headquarters waiting for the word to attack. "Hold on, boys," instructed Mark, "I'll clear it with Waverly first, of course, but I think we can take this THRUSH hideaway without having to blast our way through. Give us half an hour. If you haven't heard anything by then, go ahead."

Mark then spoke with Mr. Waverly. After some argument, UNCLE's chief agreed to the plan

With great speed April and Mark peeled off their outfits and put on those of the THRUSH gang. As April stepped into sight from the shrubbery which for a couple of minutes had been her dressing-room, Mark smiled wryly: "Very chic, my dear," he said.

April gave him a friendly, impish smile in return

By this time the THRUSH driver was regaining consciousness and a couple of quick cheek slaps from April brought him round more quickly. "In the driver's seat . . . and back to headquarters," she commanded.

There was no alternative so the surly agent got in. Mark sat by his side and April climbed in the back. Within seconds they were speeding back to THRUSH headquarters . . . and to perhaps the most dangerous part, yet of their highly eventful mission.

Passing the outpost guards was comparatively simple. The cursory check with the driver and the superficial glance inside the car was nothing more than a formality and the car eased farther inside THRUSH headquarters, Mark keeping his small pistol well between the ribs of his THRUSH driver.

The headquarters was a large Mexican mansion made of white stone, now greying. UNCLE intelligence had reported about twenty THRUSH agents as staffing the place, which meant that April and Mark were somewhat outnumbered. As the car pulled to a halt outside the front door, Mark told the driver to get out. As he turned to do so April, from the back seat, brought two fingers down with intense pressure on the back of his neck and the THRUSH driver sank into oblivion.

The two UNCLE agents strode up to the door and rang the bell A burly THRUSH agent opened the door, then shrank back in utter astonishment as Mark sunk his right fist deeply into his midriff. As he dropped forward, a beautiful two-fisted drive brought him upright again and shattered his body against the side of the door. He slid gently down it and sat motionless.

"Pardon me," interjected April,

striding over his outstretched legs. Mark dragged him out of range and then closed the door behind them. "You take upstairs, April, I'll take down."

"Just as you say, Mark."

Resistance was not heavy, but both Mark and April had their moments. A tear gas capsule halted an advancing group as Mark broke up a card school in one of the downstairs rooms, while April, on the first floor, used her miniature knock-out drops to great advantage.

Mark was first to dispose of his ground-floor group and he charged up the wide, open staircase to aid April.

The Girl from UNCLE had been doing well, but taking on two thugs at once was proving hard going. She was ready for Mark's help as he arrived . . but then, while April was disposing of one of the THRUSH pair, the other grabbed her from behind and drew a pistol, levelling it at her temple.

Mark halted in his tracks. He was powerless to help.

The THRUSH agent edged his way down the stairs, leaving Mark at the top and keeping April as a cover. Almost on the brink of success it looked now as though April was going to be captured by THRUSH. Slowly the agent eased farther downstairs, the gun close to April's head and his eyes never shifting from Mark.

The dull murmur from the doorway as the THRUSH agent pulverised by Mark at the entrance to the house as he and April had arrived began to regain consciousness, gave the chink of hope the UNCLE agents needed. April felt the grip ease just slightly as her captor glanced over his shoulder towards the door.

Was it another UNCLE agent? He wasn't sure, and he had to know.

April sensed the momentary falter . . . and acted. As the grip eased she thrust down and back. It was a strong, surprise move and it came off. April slipped the grip, but in doing so lost her balance and both she and the THRUSH agent fell the remaining twelve steps to the open hallway. The gun slid loose. April, shaken, was scrambling to her feet when Mark's warning echoed round the old house. Her captor was coming at her with an ornamental sabre which had been decorating the wall at the bottom of the stairs.

Cat-like, she squatted and waited for the move to come. As he lunged she sprang to the left and the sabre stabbed the air six inches from her. While he was recovering, April sprang across the hallway in an attempt to reach the gun. She was still three yards short, when, prone, she looked over her shoulder to see the glint of steel again.

The sabre had already started on its journey and April was shrinking back in horror when a shot rang out. Mark, from the top of the stairs, had for the first time got an unimpeded view of April's protagonist. His small gun had been dead on target. As the sabre clattered harmlessly to the floor, the THRUSH agent stiffened, stretched, half spun on his heels, and then collapsed.

The man in the doorway, still dazed from Mark's assault, was only just beginning to realise what was happening as April got to her feet, recovered the gun from the hallway floor and trained it on him.

As Mark joined her, April leant against him for support. "A bit close, that one, Mark," she confessed.

Time was nearly up. As April and Mark came out of the house, UNCLE's take-over squad was moving in. In fifteen minutes the entire unit was in custody. With the house empty, UNCLE moved in flame-throwers and the THRUSH headquarters, together with expensive and highly sophisticated electronic equipment, was soon a rubble of ruins.

No *Girl From U.N.C.L.E.* is ever caught out in the cold. Knit yourself this cosy sweater with its contrasting 'flashes' picked out in your personal colour choice. Casually comfortable, yet stylish enough to take you anywhere—whatever your mission.

Measurements
To fit 34 (36)-inch bust. Length from top of shoulder 24 inches. Sleeve seam 17½ inches.

Materials
12 (12) ozs. Main colour, 2 (2) ozs. Contrast Sirdar Fontein Crepe, or 11 (11) ozs. Main colour, 2 (2) ozs. Contrast Majestic 4-ply wool; 1 pair each no. 10 and 12 knitting needles; 3 small buttons.
Figures in brackets refer to larger size.

Tension
7½ sts. to 1 inch. Success depends on working to the correct tension.

Abbreviations
Alt., alternate; beg., beginning; comm., commencement; cont., continue; dec., decreasing; foll(s)., follows(ing); inc., increase (ing); k, knit; p, purl; rep., repeat; sl., slip 1 st. knitways; st(s)., stitch(es); st-st., stocking stitch (1 row knit, 1 row purl); tog., together; MC, Main colour; C, Contrast.
After casting off sts for shaping, one stitch will remain on the right hand needle which is not included in the instructions that follow.
N.B. When working with different balls of wool, the shade to be used should be twisted round the shade just used to link the colours together.

The Back: Using No. 10 needles and main colour cast on 117 [125] sts.
1st Row. Sl, k1, * pl. k1, rep. from * to last st, k1.
2nd Row. Sl, * p1, k1, rep. from * to end of row. Rep. 1st and 2nd rows 3 times.
9th Row. S1, k1, * p1, k1, rep. from * to last 3 sts, p1, inc. once in next st, k1. 118 [126] sts.
10th Row. S1, knit to end of row (for turning line). Proceed as foils:
1st Row. S1, knit to end of row.
2nd Row. S1, purl to last st, k1.
Rep. 1st and 2nd rows 8 times.
Work 81 rows in st-st, inc once at each end of next and every foll. 16th row. 130 [138] sts.
Commencing with a purl row work 41 rows without shaping.

Shape for the Armholes: Cast off 6 sts at beg. of each of next 2 rows. Work 32 [16] rows, dec once at each

end of next and every foll. 4th row. 102 [118] sts.
Work 24 [40] rows, dec once at each end of next and every alt. row. 78 sts.

Divide for the Back Opening:
Next Row. K2 tog., k34, turn.
Working on these 35 sts only proceed as folls:
Next Row. S1, purl to the last st. k1.
Work 36 rows, dec once at armhole edge in next and every alt. row. 17 sts.
Cast off.
With right side of work facing, slip the first 6 sts onto a safety pin and leave for the overlay.
With right side of work facing, rejoin MC to remaining 36 sts and proceed as folls:
Next Row. Knit to last 2 sts, k2 tog.
Next Row. S1, purl to last st, k1.
Work 36 rows, dec once at armhole edge in next and every alt. row. 17 sts.
Cast off.

The Overlay: With right side of work facing and using No. 10 needles, rejoin MC wool to the 6 sts left on safety pin and proceed as folls.:
1st Row. Inc once in the first st, (p1, k1) twice, k1. (7 sts).
2nd Row. S1, (p1, k1) 3 times.
3rd Row. S1, k1, (p1, k1) twice, k1.
4th Row. S1, (p1, k1) 3 times.
Rep. 3rd and 4th rows once.
7th Row. S1, k1, cast off 2 sts, k2.
8th Row. S1, p1, k1, cast on 2 sts, p1, k1.
Rep. 3rd and 4th rows 8 times, 7th and 8th rows once, 3rd and 4th 6 times
Break off MC wool, leave sts on pin.

The Underlay: Using No. 10 needles and MC wool cast on 7 sts.
1st Row. S1, k1, (p1, k1) twice, k1.
2nd Row. S1, (p1, k1) 3 times.
Rep. 1st and 2nd rows 18 times.
Break off MC wool, leave these sts on safety pin.

The Front: Using No. 10 needles and MC wool cast on 117 [125] sts.
1st Row: S1, k1, * p1, k1, rep. from * to last st, k1.
2nd Row. S1, * p1, k1, rep. from * to end of row. Rep. 1st and 2nd rows 3 times.
9th Row. S1, k1, * p1, k1, rep. from * to last 3 sts. p1, inc once in next st. k1. 118 [126] sts.
10th Row. S1, knit to end of row (for turning line). Proceed as folls:
1st Row. S1, knit to end of row.
2nd Row. S1, purl to last st, k1.
Rep. 1st and 2nd rows 8 times
Work 66 [74] rows in st-st, inc once at each end of next and every foll. 16th row. 128 [136] sts.
Join in Contrast wool.
Next Row. K1C, k126 [134], MC, join in a second ball of C, k1C.
Next Row. S1C, p126 [134] MC, k1C.
Next Row. S1, k1C, k124 [132] MC, k2C.
Next Row. S1, p1C, p124 [132] MC, p1C, k1C.
Work 3 [11] rows (working 2 sts less in MC wool in centre and one st more in C wool at each side as before) Inc once at each end of the 3rd [11th] row 130 [138] sts.
Commencing with a purl row work 41 rows without shaping.

Shape for Armholes: Cast off 6 sts at beg. of each of next 2 rows.
Work 32 [16] rows, dec once at each end of next and every foll. 4th row. 102 [118] sts.
Work 46 [62] rows, dec once at each end of next and every alt. row. 56 sts.
Next Row. K2togC, k26 C, using the second ball of C wool k26 C, k2togC.
Break off MC and first Ball of C wool.

Shape the Neck: Next row. Using C wool only s1, p16, cast off 20 sts purlways, p15, k1, turn.
Working on the first 17 sts only proceed as folls:
Work 8 rows dec once at armhole edge in the next and every alt. row, at the same time dec once at neck edge in every row. 5 sts.
Work 4 rows, dec once at armhole edge only in 1st and 3rd rows. 3 sts.
Next Row. K2tog, k1.
Next Row. K2tog.
Break off wool and fasten off.
With the right side of the work facing, rejoin C wool to remaining 17 sts and proceed as folls:
Work 8 rows, dec once at neck edge in every row at the same time dec once at armhole edge in next and every alt. row. 5 sts.
Work 4 rows, dec once at armhole edge only in 1st and 3rd rows. 3 sts.
Next Row. S1, k2tog.
Next Row. K2tog.
Break off wool and fasten off.

The Sleeves (Both alike): Using No. 10 needles and C cast on 61 sts.
1st Row. S1, knit to end of row.
2nd Row. S1, purl to last st, k1.
Rep. 1st and 2nd rows 3 times then 1st row once.
10th Row. S1, knit to end of row (for turning line). Rep. 1st and 2nd rows 14 times.
Break off C wool, join in MC and proceed as folls:
1st Row. S1, knit to end of row.
2nd Row. S1, purl to last st, K1.
Rep. 1st and 2nd rows 3 times.
Cont. in st-st, inc once at each end of next and every foll. 6th row until there are 97 sts on needle.
Cont. without shaping until work measures 18½ inches from comm., ending on wrong side of work.

Shape for the Top: Cast off 6 sts at beg. of each next 2 rows. Work 36 rows, dec. once at each end of next and every foll. 4th row. 67 sts.
Work 58 rows, dec once at each end of next and every alt. row. 9 sts. Cast off.

To Make Up: Using a damp cloth and warm iron, press carefully. Sew up side and sleeve seams. Placing seam to seam, sew decreased edge of sleeves to decreased edges of the bodice. Turn back the first 10 rows at the lower edge and commencement of the sleeves and sew in position on the wrong side to form a hem (the ridge forms the absolute lower edge).
Sew the overlay and underlay in position.

The neckband: With right side of work facing, using No. 12 needles and C wool, work across 7 sts left on safety pin of the underlay as follows:—k1, (k1, p1) 3 times, pick up and knit 17 sts from the 17 cast off sts at the left half of the back of the neck, 9 sts from the 9 cast off sts at the top of the left sleeve, 14 sts evenly along the left side of the front of the neck, 20 sts from the 20 cast off sts at the front of the neck, 13 sts evenly along the right side of the front of the neck, 9 sts from the 9 cast off sts at the top of the right sleeve, 17 sts from the 17 cast off sts at the right half of the back of the neck, work across the 7 sts left on safety pin of the overlay as folls: (p1, k1) 3 times, k1, 113 sts.
1st Row. S1, * p1, k1, rep. from * to end.
2nd Row. S1, k1, * p1, k1, rep. from * to the last st, k1.
3rd Row. S1, * p1, k1, rep. from * to end.
4th Row. S1, k1, * p1, k1, rep. from * to the last 5 sts, cast off 2 sts, k2.
5th Row. S1, p1, k1, cast on 2 sts, * p1, k1, rep. from * to end of row.
Rep. 2nd and 3rd rows then 2nd row once.
9th Row. S1, knit to end of row (for turning line).
Rep. 2nd and 3rd rows twice then 4th and 5th rows once.
Rep. 2nd and 3rd rows once then 2nd row once. Cast off in rib.
Fold neckband in half and sew in position on the wrong side of work. Buttonhole stitch together the buttonholes in the neckband to form 1 buttonhole.
Sew on buttons to correspond with holes. Press neckband and all seams.

MAYBE U.N.C.L.E NEEDS YOU!

Special agents—even pretty ones—have to pass intelligence tests to qualify for their jobs. They have to have a good deal of knowledge on many different subjects.

Here is a typical quiz which might be set for special agents. How would you rate in the UNCLE grading?

Score yourself 3 marks for each correct answer. If you score 30 marks UNCLE needs you : 24 or over, you would still make a useful agent : but if you score anything below 12, forget about being a secret agent and take up knitting instead.

1 A bullet can be proved to have been fired from a particular weapon by the examination of the thousands of very fine scratch-marks made on its sides as it is forced through the grooves in the barrel. But if only a shell case is found, is it possible to prove the weapon which was used?

2 Sir Robert Peel established the Metropolitan Police Force in 1829. When did the first plain-clothes men start operating?

3 How many main blood groups are there—and can you name them?

4 When was the Federal Bureau of Investigation founded and what American president was in office at the time?

5 If you, as an ordinary citizen, found a man committing a felony could you arrest him?

6 If a body is exhumed because it is suspected death was caused by poisoning, samples of the soil from immediately around the coffin will be taken. Why?

7 What is a serologist?

8 A thief steals a bicycle, files off the identification number carefully and then paints the machine a different colour. When he is caught how can the police identify the stolen bicycle?

9 Does Scotland Yard automatically investigate every murder committed in this country?

10 Some murderers, thinking to destroy their victims' bodies, bury them in quicklime. Are they right or wrong?

ANSWERS

1 *It is easier. A shell is rarely as distorted as a bullet and, while not scratched by passage through the barrelling, a shell bears the marks of the breech block and firing pin. Breech blocks are alike and rifle gun barrels and fingerprints—no two are alike*

2 *In 1842, but only for administrative work and to protect the Royal Family. The C.I.D. proper wasn't born until 1868*

3 *Four : O, A, B and AB.*

4 *In 1908 when Theodore Roosevelt was president*

5 *Not only could you arrest him, but you must. Any person is duty bound by law, to arrest someone committing a felony in his presence.*

■ *Because if the police used was arsenic and someone is charged with murder the defence might claim that the arsenic was in the ground and attacked the body*

7 *A scientist who studies serums and their action. He can identify the group of any bloodstains found at the scene of the crime*

8 *Although the thief filed away the number, the stamp die which punched it will have done so with considerable force. A chemical reagent will make the number visible long enough for it to be photographed*

■ *No. The Yard cannot investigate a case unless it is called in by the Chief Constable of the area.*

10 *Wrong. Quicklime dries the body, preventing decay and thereby preserving it.*

THE Pathfinders were the greatest pop group in London. Since they had first hit the charts their engagement book had been consistently full Yet, in spite of their many lucrative offers or one night stands, they had generously agreed to perform, free of charge, at the Chelsea Hall in aid of charity. Their amplified guitar music, set against the rhythmic beating of the drums, and the banshee wailing of their voices, at times sent the crowded dancers screaming with delight. The bright colours of their gear matched their mood. The young stars, with their long, shampooed hair, twisted to their own compulsive beat.

April Dancer swayed to the rhythm of the dance. She had only been in London for a couple of days, but already she had caught the mood of the city. She had bought, in Carnaby Street, a dress as fashionable as anything she had ever seen, and her hair had been set in the latest sleek and silky style. She felt part of this young and energetic gay society. Even her vocabulary had changed. Everything to her now was wonderful, fabulous, terrific, gorgeous.

England was swinging, and April was swinging with it.

"You have more energy than the Gojos," said Roger Moreland, her tall, yet agile partner

Roger was in the Coldstream Guards, stationed at Chelsea Barracks. Although he was rehearsing for the Trooping of the Colour ceremony scheduled for the end of the week, and in spite of his other guard duties, he had managed to take an evening off to attend the charity ball.

April laughed. "If the Gojos get paid for dancing, they've certainly got a terrific job."

April's face clouded as she thought of her job. Not that she disliked it at the moment; in fact, this undoubtedly was the most delightful assignment she had had as an UNCLE agent.

She was working as a typist in the Indian Famine Fund Organisation, where it was thought she could obtain useful background information, if required. Apparently, someone in India had stopped and looted a couple of food trains bound for the famine areas. UNCLE headquarters had immediately despatched two of their ablest agents to the trouble spot to prevent a recurrence. Since the lives of hundreds of thousands of people depended on these food trains getting through, UNCLE was leaving nothing to chance.

At the end of the number, the lead guitarist waved aside the applause. "Thank you, thank you," he said into the microphone. "Now it's my pleasure to present the charming lady who has made all this possible I have just heard that the sale of tickets alone for this charity ball has amounted to over £6600. This has been donated by all of you wonderful people and will be sent to the Indian Famine Fund.

"As you know, charities of this size take a considerable amount of organisation, and our thanks go to Lady Cynthia Poppingham-Keyes who made all this possible. Ladies and gentlemen, a big hand please for this wonderful person. Lady Cynthia."

Lady Cynthia was overwhelmed by the applause as she was helped on to the stage.

"Thank you, thank you," she said in her shrill voice. "Your gratitude overwhelms me, but it is I who should thank you. After all, without your support, my efforts would be worthless. And I must also thank these four young men, The Pathfinders, who volunteered to perform here tonight, free of charge, in aid of the Indian Famine Fund

"Now we, in England, have much to be thankful for. I see you are all well dressed. Many of you are wearing new clothes tonight. You all look well fed to me, and from what I've seen of the catering, none of us are likely to go hungry for the next six months. But, as you may know, many people in the east, even in the best of times, have barely sufficient food to keep body and soul together. And when their crops fail, as they have in many parts of India this year, thousands of people starve. Apart from the agony of starvation, many have to suffer the even more cruel misfortune of watching their children growing weak and dying, unable to give them the food to prevent this terrible tragedy.

"I know you have all been generous in the past with your donations, but I am going to encroach on your generosity even further. I'm coming round with a sack to collect a little more. Now, I don't want pennies and halfpennies, I want ten-shilling notes and pound notes if you can afford them. Remember, what you give will save lives."

She stepped down from the stage and passed around the hall.

Roger put his arm around April's shoulders and led her off the dance floor. "She never gives up, does she?"

April shook her head.

"You look parched. Let me get you a drink. Do you fancy coffee?"

"It's frightfully expensive."

Roger smiled. "It's for a good cause. I'll be back in a minute."

April sat on a leather-covered bench to rest her weary feet. She would have felt happier about all this if the food trains were reaching their destinations; but they were not. The Oxfam trains got through every time, but not the Indian Famine Fund trains.

Suddenly April sat bolt upright. It occurred to her that it was odd that the Oxfam trains were never looted, yet to a gang of thieves in India one food train was surely as good as another

That meant that the hold-ups must have been planned in London, and since only the Indian Famine Fund supplies were held up, the criminals must be right here in her own organisation. Of course, railway hold-ups require a great deal of skilful planning. Only someone in the organisation would have time to plan the stopping, unloading and disposing of the various cargoes.

Only that afternoon, she had typed and dispatched a signal requesting the conveyance of 150 tons of grain by rail from the port of Bombay to Hyderabad, one of the stricken areas. It was obvious that whoever was behind the hold-ups would be planning to intercept this food train at this moment.

April decided she must prevent them if she could, and there wasn't a moment to lose.

She slipped on her shoes and, without waiting for her coffee, left the hall. The Indian Famine Fund Organisation offices were two blocks away. She ran practically all the way.

"Yes, miss?" asked the burly night porter as she barged through the swing doors.

"Er, I left my handbag in the office. I'll just pop up and get it."

"Very good, miss. Shall I come up with you?"

"Oh, no, no. I can find my own way, thank you."

"Here's the key."

"Thank you." April took the lift to the fourth floor and let herself into her office. The office, by day so cheerful, was quite frightening at night.

She opened the filing cabinet and took out the consignment note to copy down the address. Next she slipped a sheet of paper into her typewriter and stamped out a telegram message

"URGENT. CANCEL CONSIGNMENT NOTE P1221. DESTINATION 150 TONS GRAIN—POONA, TO BE CALLED FOR. AND NOT, REPEAT NOT, HYDERABAD."

Her heart was beating rapidly. Suddenly she heard footsteps in the corridor and, slipping the message in

her handbag, she put away the file. The door opened and in came the burly night porter.

"Did you find it, miss?"

"Er, no. I must have left it in the hotel."

"Oh! I'll let you know if it's handed in tomorrow."

"Thank you," said April, pushing past him. He escorted her out of the building.

The nearest all-night telegram office would be at Clapham Junction. April hailed a taxi and raced off through the night. She sent her message, but as she stepped out of the station she felt uneasy. Without her cape, she shivered in the night air.

Her watch said 12.25 a.m. By now the charity ball would be over. It was pointless going back to the Chelsea Hall now, and it worried her that she had run out on Roger. She had not contacted UNCLE headquarters for permission to stop the train, for she knew she would not get their permission: UNCLE headquarters did not take women's intuitions into consideration when deciding their policies. She dare not inform them now She found it difficult to swallow when she imagined the thousands of starving people in Hyderabad waiting for a food train which she had stopped in a goods siding 250 miles away.

She hardly slept a wink that night, nor ate a bite of breakfast the next morning

In the bright English morning sunshine, she walked around to St. James's Palace, where Roger was on guard duty. Her heart lifted a little when she saw the Coldstream Guards outside their sentry boxes. She walked round the palace, then she saw Roger in his scarlet jacket and black bearskin at the main gate.

"Roger," she called. "I'm sorry about last night."

He glanced down at her, then stared straight ahead.

"I had to rush off to send a telegram."

Roger swung his rifle up on his shoulder, took a pace forward and stamped his highly polished boot on the pavement.

"I'd explain it to you if I could."

Roger turned smartly to the right, and marched off without saying a word.

"Roger," called April, running along beside him. "I know you've every right to be mad at me, but I said I'm sorry."

The guardsman turned about and marched back to his sentry box. April shuffled up to him again. "Well, there's no need to cut me dead. I said I was sorry."

Still Roger ignored her. April stamped her kinky white boot on the pavement. Then, turning on her heel, she walked away close to tears. She hoped he would call her back; but he completely ignored her, as if she was a total stranger.

All day she sat at her desk sending thank you letters to the donators to the Indian Famine Fund. She ignored her office friends, and said she would rather not go out with them that day for lunch

"Looks as if she's lost a bob and found a tanner," said one of the girls.

They wisely ignored her for the rest of the day.

After work April wandered round to the café for a bite to eat. There was still six hours to go before she dare send another telegram ordering the movement of the food train. Time drags for the young She ordered a Danish salad. It was tasty, and quite filling, but she had little stomach for it. She sat quietly on a stool against the bar counter and nibbled a piece of hard-boiled egg. She felt guilty knowing that many people in the state of Hyderabad

would not be eating that day because of her.

Suddenly a red cape was draped around her shoulders.

"The cape fits. You must be Cinderella!"

It was Roger Moreland. April slid her plate along the snack bar top and moved away from him on to another stool. She would show him that she could cut him dead too.

Roger moved up besides her. "Did your carriage change back into a pumpkin before you got home?"

April moved away again.

Again Roger moved besides her. "What's wrong April? If I've done anything to upset you, I'm sorry."

April could move away no farther. She was at the end of the counter.

"You didn't speak to me this morning when I said I was sorry, did you?" she blurted out.

"I couldn't. I was on duty."

"You didn't even look at me."

"I couldn't. The palace guards must not talk or look at anyone."

April turned away from him.

"Listen to me, April. Even if a wasp settled on my nose, I couldn't brush it away. I would have to let it sting me." He put his arm around her shoulders. "Believe me, I wanted to speak to you, honest I did."

April smiled. "I don't suppose you'd believe my story either, but I am sorry."

"And so am I. Oh, let's forget it, shall we, and take up where we left off last night? Are you going to a party tonight?"

"There's one in Kensington, but I don't feel like going."

"Well, let me show you London, after you've finished your tea."

"I'd like that." She pushed away her half-eaten meal.

"Thousands in India are starving," said Roger.

"I know. You make me feel awful."

It was a beautiful summer's evening. They walked round the Serpentine, down the Mall, through Trafalgar Square, Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square. Pleasantly tired, they caught a tube train back to Chelsea.

April kept looking at her watch. She had forgotten her consignment note number. That meant she would have to go back to the office before she could send off her vital telegram.

"Roger, I have to go back to the office. Please don't ask me why."

"As you wish. I'll come with you."

"You'll have to wait outside."

"If you promise you'll come out and see me again."

"I promise."

The night porter was not in his lodge. April guessed he was touring the building, so she helped herself to the office key behind the reception desk and let herself into her office. She would be relieved when this job was over. She slipped a new carbon paper between two sheets of paper and slid them into her typewriter. She typed out her message.

URGENT REFERENCE CONSIGNMENT NO. P1221 AND LAST TELEGRAM. PLEASE FORWARD 150 TONS OF GRAIN TO RED CROSS, HYDERABAD. ALL HASTE

Suddenly she heard the lift motor running. Automatically she switched out the light and slipped the message and the copy into her handbag. As footsteps crept along the corridor she hid behind the door. Slowly the door opened, and she flattened herself against the wall. A torchlight flashed around the room, came to rest on her desk, and the office light was switched on.

It was the burly night porter. He

picked up the new carbon paper and held it against the light. Immediately he put down his heavy torch and picked up the telephone.

"Museum 95197," he said. "Is that you, Jake? Listen. I can't explain now, but that train that should have gone to Hyderabad last night did not go." There was a pause. The night porter doodled on the blotting pad. "I don't know exactly what happened. I think you'd better come round to see for yourself."

April heard him put down the receiver. He sniffed a little. Perhaps he had noticed her perfume. The door moved away from April, and the burly porter stood before her.

"What are you doing here?" he snarled.

"I . . . I . . . er," said April, backing round her desk.

"You've heard too much, you have." He grabbed her by the shoulders. "What else do you know?"

April fumbled behind her for a weapon with which to defend herself. She grasped his heavy torch, and swung it up so that it caught him on the point of the jaw. He reeled back, then, using all her strength, she smashed it down on to his head. The porter fell forward, blood trickled out of the corner of his mouth.

April was stunned by what she had done. In fact, she only recovered herself when Roger came bounding into the office.

"What's wrong?" he asked. "I saw you struggling with someone in the window."

She had fully recovered herself when she heard the lift motor running She stood behind the door with Roger. The door opened and in walked two Anglo-Indians, to judge by their half-caste appearances They pulled up suddenly when they saw the night porter securely tied and gagged on the floor.

"What's happened?" asked one.

"The game's up," said April, "if your name's Jake."

The swarthy-skinned man spun round to face April. "Who are you? What are you talking about?"

"A little matter of rail hold-ups, which seems to be your particular line of business. As soon as we arranged for a food train to be sent to one of the famine areas, you immediately informed your colleagues of the fact, so they would have time to organise their trucks, pneumatic unloading gear, or whatever else they required to lift the consignment."

"You can't prove that!"

"No, but the police will when they arrive in a minute."

Jake pulled out a flick-knife. "We'll see about that."

This was too much for Roger. As Jake tried to make a getaway from the office, Roger blocked the door. Jake tried to push him aside but Roger, with the toughness of an oak beam and the strength of a steam engine, knocked him to the floor.

"I'm not to blame," said the other Indian, stepping back with his hands raised. "It was all Jake's idea. I only met his mob today."

The massed bands played on Horseguards Parade as the Queen, on her horse Winston, inspected her troops. April craned her neck to see Roger amongst the ranks of guardsmen.

Her radio transceiver buzzed in her handbag. April ignored it for a moment, but as the buzzing persisted, she slipped out her powder compact and opened the lid.

"Is that you, Miss Dancer?" It was Mr. Waverly's voice from UNCLE headquarters.

"Go ahead."

"We haven't heard from you, but I supposed you were having a very quiet time in London. The last Indian Famine Fund train got through to Hyderabad intact, although for some inexplicable reason it was delayed for a day at Poona. Fortunate, as it happened, because that night another goods train was held up and located only a hundred miles from Hyderabad. The Indian army have gone into the area to round up everyone possessing a new watch, television set or car. Seems as if most of the black marketeers have been captured."

"It's a relief to know the food train got through," said April. "By the way, Mr. Waverly, I've got four weeks holiday due to me. Do you mind if I have them now?"

"Not at all, Miss Dancer. Make the most of your stay in London. No doubt I'll soon have a more exciting assignment for you. Enjoy your holiday."

April snapped her powder compact shut.

The Coldstream Guards swung across the parade ground, proudly bearing their standard. The Irish Guards came next, then the Grenadiers, then the Welsh Guards, then the Scots.

The Girl from UNCLE had been to many strange and fascinating places all over the globe, but the most exciting, to her, was London.

THE GIRL FROM U.N.C.L.E.

SUDDENLY THERE'S A RASH OF ACCIDENTS...THE VICTIMS--VETERAN U.N.C.L.E. AGENTS, MEN WITH A HIGHLY-DEVELOPED SIXTH SENSE OF DANGER. ILLOGICAL? UNLIKELY? MR. WAVERLY THINKS SO. AND HE WILL CALL ON AGENT APRIL DANCER TO EXERT ALL HER FEMININE WILES AND CUNNING AS WELL AS HER THOROUGH U.N.C.L.E. TRAINING TO PUT AN END TO

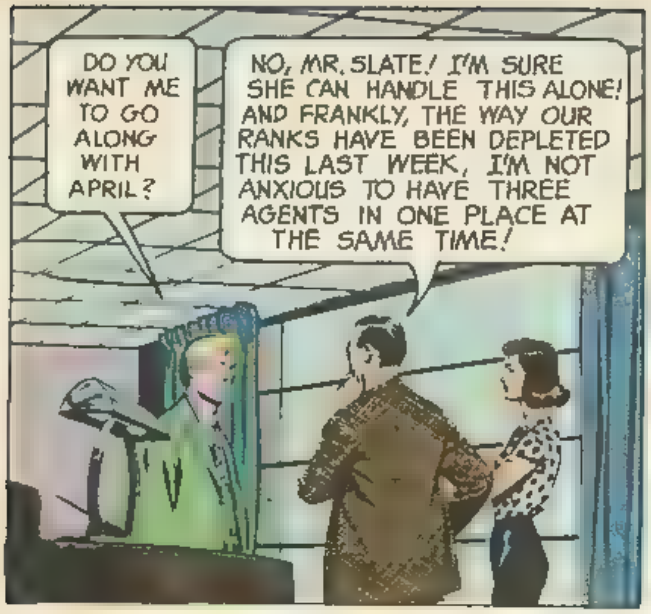
THE FATAL ACCIDENTS AFFAIR

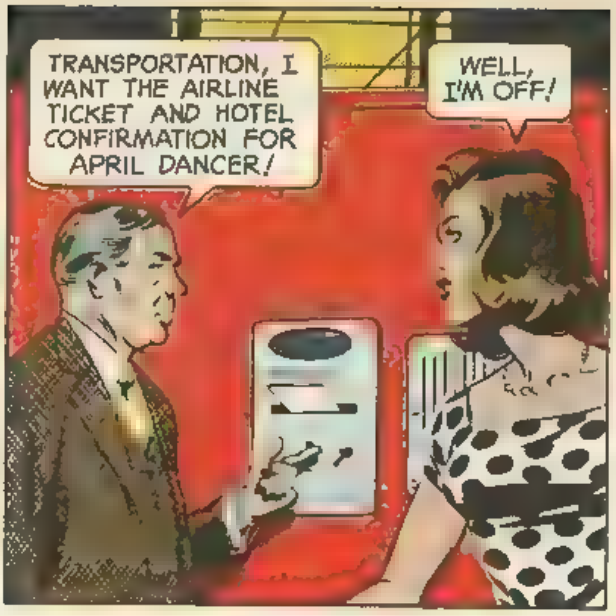
THE *THIRD* UNCLE AGENT IN A WEEK WAS KILLED IN THAT WRECK! IT HAPPENED IN ARIZONA! IT WAS LISTED BY THE POLICE AS AN "ACCIDENT"!

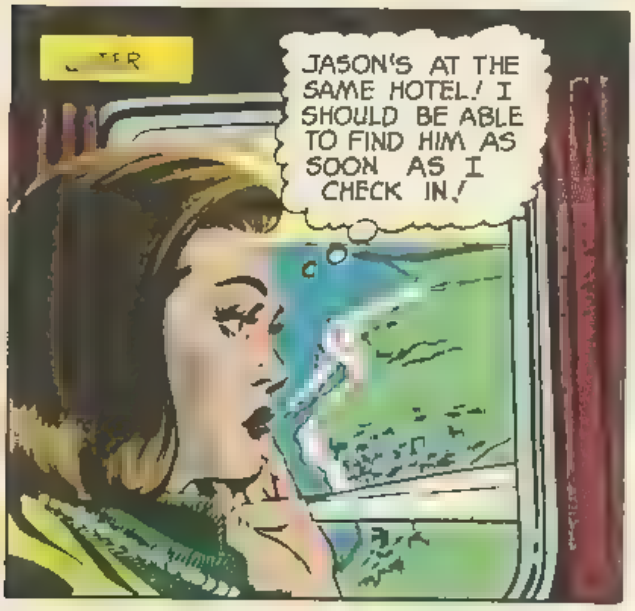
BUT YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT!

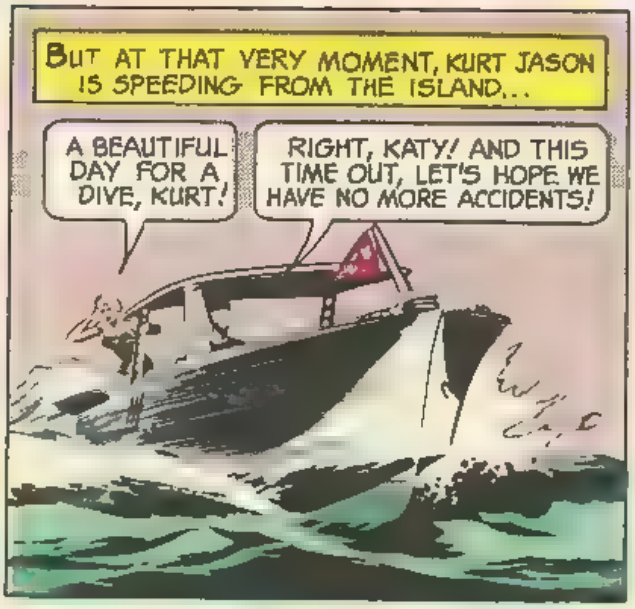
NO, MISS DANCER, NO MORE THAN I BELIEVE *THIS* WRECK WAS AN ACCIDENT! BY A MIRACLE, KURT JASON, OUR MAN IN PUERTO RICO, JUST MISSED BEING KILLED IN THAT SPEEDBOAT!

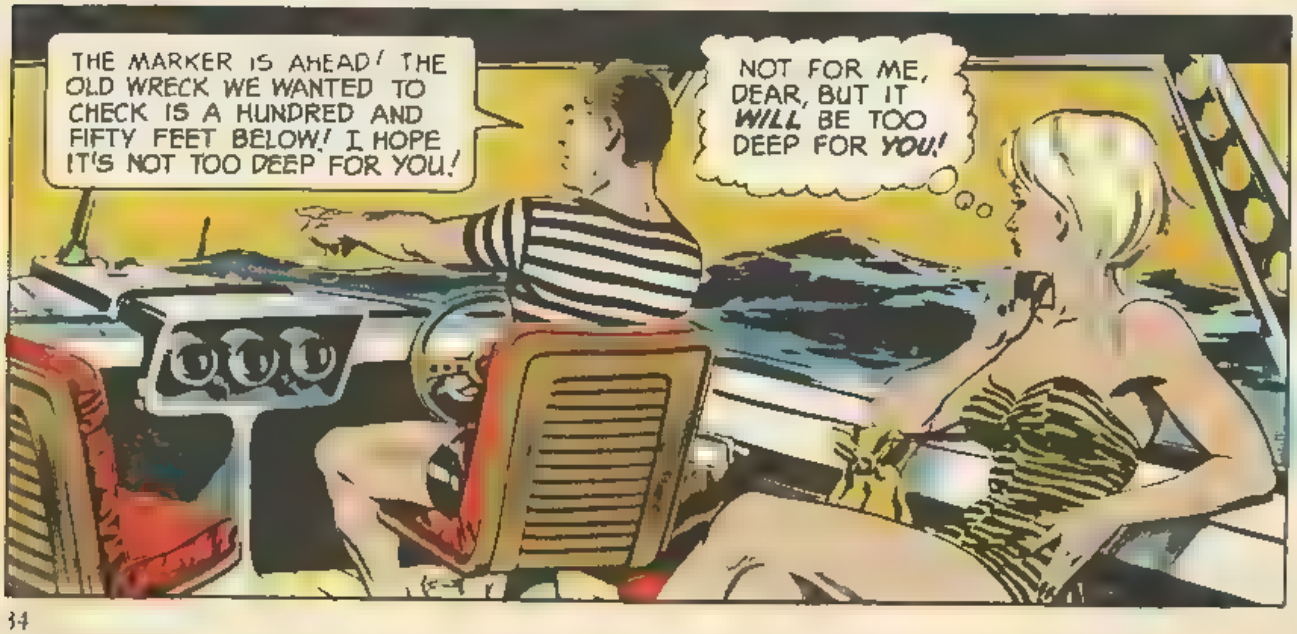
MISS DANCER, I'M SENDING YOU TO PUERTO RICO TO GATHER ALL THE FACTS ABOUT JASON'S CRASH! I'VE SPOKEN WITH HIM DIRECTLY BY RADIO, HE SEEMS QUITE HAZY! PERHAPS HE IS STILL SHAKEN--PERHAPS THERE'S ANOTHER REASON!


DO YOU WANT ME TO GO ALONG WITH APRIL?
NO, MR. SLATE! I'M SURE SHE CAN HANDLE THIS ALONE! AND FRANKLY, THE WAY OUR RANKS HAVE BEEN DEPLETED THIS LAST WEEK, I'M NOT ANXIOUS TO HAVE THREE AGENTS IN ONE PLACE AT THE SAME TIME!


TRANSPORTATION, I WANT THE AIRLINE TICKET AND HOTEL CONFIRMATION FOR APRIL DANCER!
WELL, I'M OFF!


JASON'S AT THE SAME HOTEL! I SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND HIM AS SOON AS I CHECK IN!

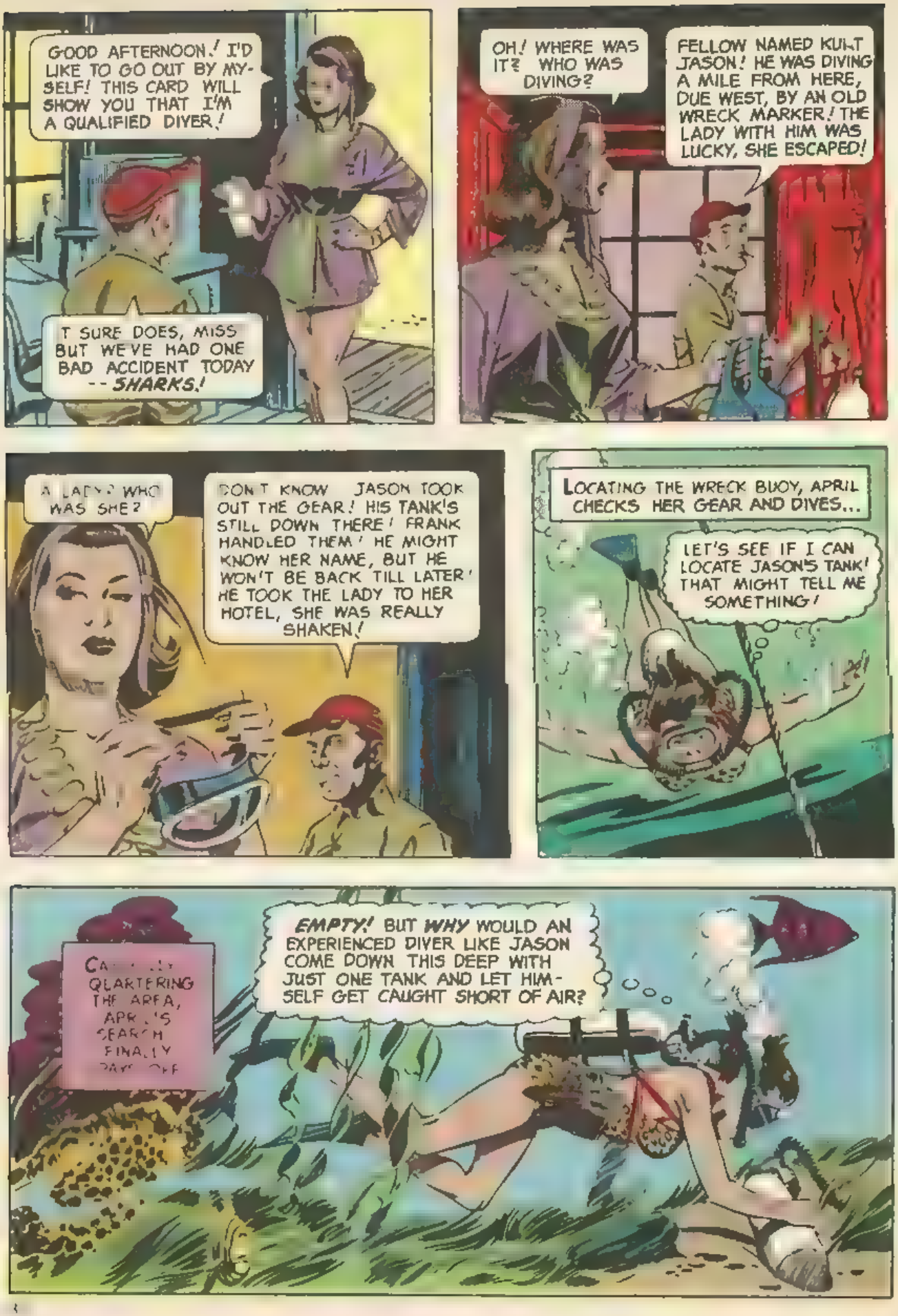

BUT AT THAT VERY MOMENT, KURT JASON IS SPEEDING FROM THE ISLAND...
A BEAUTIFUL DAY FOR A DIVE, KURT!
RIGHT, KATY! AND THIS TIME OUT, LET'S HOPE WE HAVE NO MORE ACCIDENTS!


THE MARKER IS AHEAD! THE OLD WRECK WE WANTED TO CHECK IS A HUNDRED AND FIFTY FEET BELOW! I HOPE IT'S NOT TOO DEEP FOR YOU!
NOT FOR ME, DEAR, BUT IT WILL BE TOO DEEP FOR YOU!

FOR THAT DEPTH, WE'D BETTER WORK WITH *TWO* TANKS EACH!
DO YOU REALLY THINK SO, KURT?
I'LL TAKE TWO TANKS, DEAR, BUT DO YOU THINK A GREAT, BIG STRONG MAN LIKE YOU NEEDS A SECOND TANK?
N-NO, YOU'RE RIGHT! ONE TANK'S ALL I'LL NEED DOWN THERE!
GOOD! LET ME HELP YOU GET IT ON!
SOON...
YES, IT WORKED! HIS JUDGMENT HAS BEEN AFFECTED ENOUGH TO MAKE HIM DIVE WITH ONLY ONE TANK!
AND IF I MAKE HIM STAY DOWN HERE LONG ENOUGH TO *EMPTY* THAT ONE TANK... HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT BACK UP ALIVE!

QUICKLY, AS THE MINUTES TICK BY, THE AIR TANKS ARE DRAINED..
I'M SWITCHING TO MY SECOND TANK! ANY MOMENT NOW, IT SHOULD HIT THAT UNCLE AGENT THAT HE'S OUT OF AIR!
N-NO... AIR
GOOD! HE'S PANICKING! AND IF HE TRIES RACING STRAIGHT UP THOSE HUNDRED AND FIFTY FEET, HE'S GOING TO GET HIT BY THE BENDS!
GASPING FOR BREATH, HIS JUDGMENT STRANGELY DISTORTED, KURT JASON STREAKS FOR THE SURFACE WHEN THE INEVITABLE PAIN OF THE EXCRUCIATING BENDS STRIKES.
THEN, A HELPLESS FIGURE FLOATS LIFELESSLY IN THE DEPTHS.

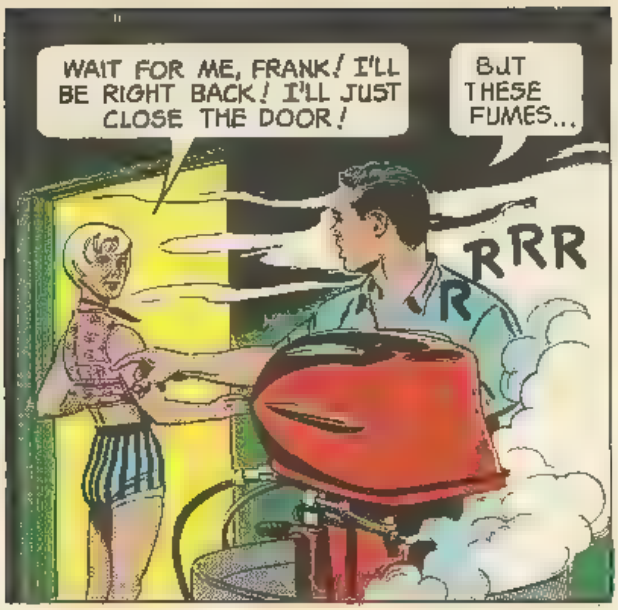
MINUTES LATER
A FEW DROPS OF THIS AND KURT WILL HAVE COMPANY!
HUNGRY COMPANY!
SOON AFTER, AS APRIL DANCER CHECKS IN.
WHAT ROOM IS MR. KURT JASON IN?
MR. J JASON? THEN YOU DON'T KNOW?
KNOW WHAT?
HE JUST MET WITH AN ACCIDENT... A FATAL ACCIDENT WHILE SCUBA DIVING!
SOON
KURT WAS CHECKED OUT AS A TOP SCUBA DIVER BY UNCLE LONG AGO! IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN AN ACCIDENT!
TACKLE BAIT
SKIN DIVING GEAR FOR RENT

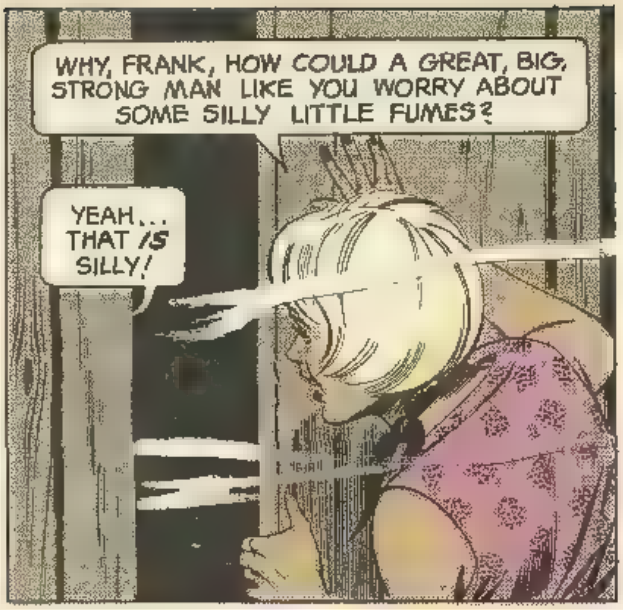

GOOD AFTERNOON! I'D LIKE TO GO OUT BY MYSELF! THIS CARD WILL SHOW YOU THAT I'M A QUALIFIED DIVER!
T SURE DOES, MISS BUT WE'VE HAD ONE BAD ACCIDENT TODAY --SHARKS!
OH! WHERE WAS IT? WHO WAS DIVING?
FELLOW NAMED KURT JASON! HE WAS DIVING A MILE FROM HERE, DUE WEST, BY AN OLD WRECK MARKER! THE LADY WITH HIM WAS LUCKY, SHE ESCAPED!
A LADY? WHO WAS SHE?
DON'T KNOW JASON TOOK OUT THE GEAR! HIS TANK'S STILL DOWN THERE! FRANK HANDLED THEM! HE MIGHT KNOW HER NAME, BUT HE WON'T BE BACK TILL LATER! HE TOOK THE LADY TO HER HOTEL, SHE WAS REALLY SHAKEN!
LOCATING THE WRECK BUOY, APRIL CHECKS HER GEAR AND DIVES...
LET'S SEE IF I CAN LOCATE JASON'S TANK! THAT MIGHT TELL ME SOMETHING!
QUARTERING THE AREA, APRIL'S SEARCH FINALLY
EMPTY! BUT WHY WOULD AN EXPERIENCED DIVER LIKE JASON COME DOWN THIS DEEP WITH JUST ONE TANK AND LET HIMSELF GET CAUGHT SHORT OF AIR?

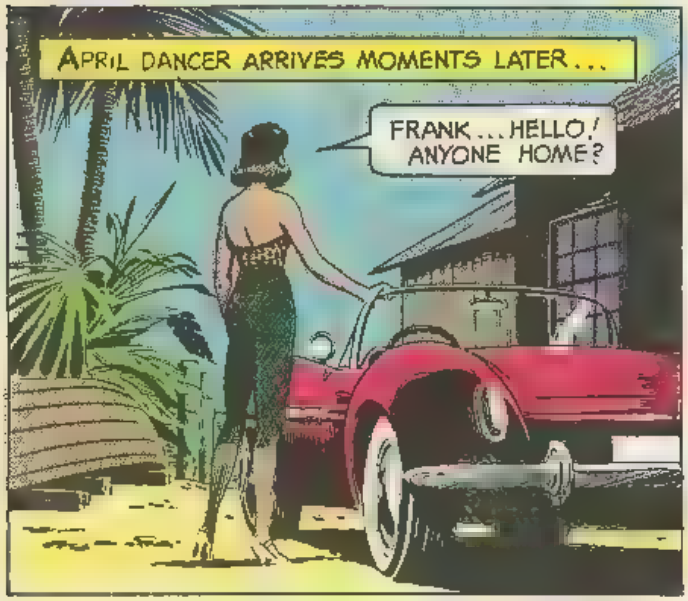
SUDDENLY, A SHADOWY MOVEMENT BEHIND HER MAKES APRIL TURN
GOT TO START UP FAST
BUT BEFORE APRIL CAN BEGIN HER RISE, ENCIRCLING ARMS CLUTCH AND SQUEEZE...
I MUST MAKE HIM LET GO
MY SHORT-WAVE RADIO RECHARGER-MAYBE IT CAN GIVE HIM ENOUGH OF A SHOCK TO MAKE HIM LET GO...
HE'S LETTING GO--BUT WILL I HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO SWIM AWAY BEFORE HE GRABS FOR ME AGAIN?

I'M GOING TO MAKE IT!
IS FRANK BACK YET?
NO NOT YET
I'LL PHONE FRANK LATER! I WANT TO FIND OUT THE NAME OF THE GIRL WHO DIVED WITH JASON! THAT EMPTY TANK NEEDS SOME EXPLAINING!
FRANK? THIS IS APRIL DANCER, I MADE A DIVE EARLIER AND WANTED TO ASK YOU SOMETHING ABOUT THE MAN WHO MET WITH THE ACCIDENT!
MR JASON?
YES, I'D LIKE TO KNOW THE NAME OF THE LADY WHO WENT DOWN WITH HIM!
WHY, FRANK, YOU WOULDN'T TELL MY NAME WITHOUT MY PERMISSION, NOW WOULD YOU?

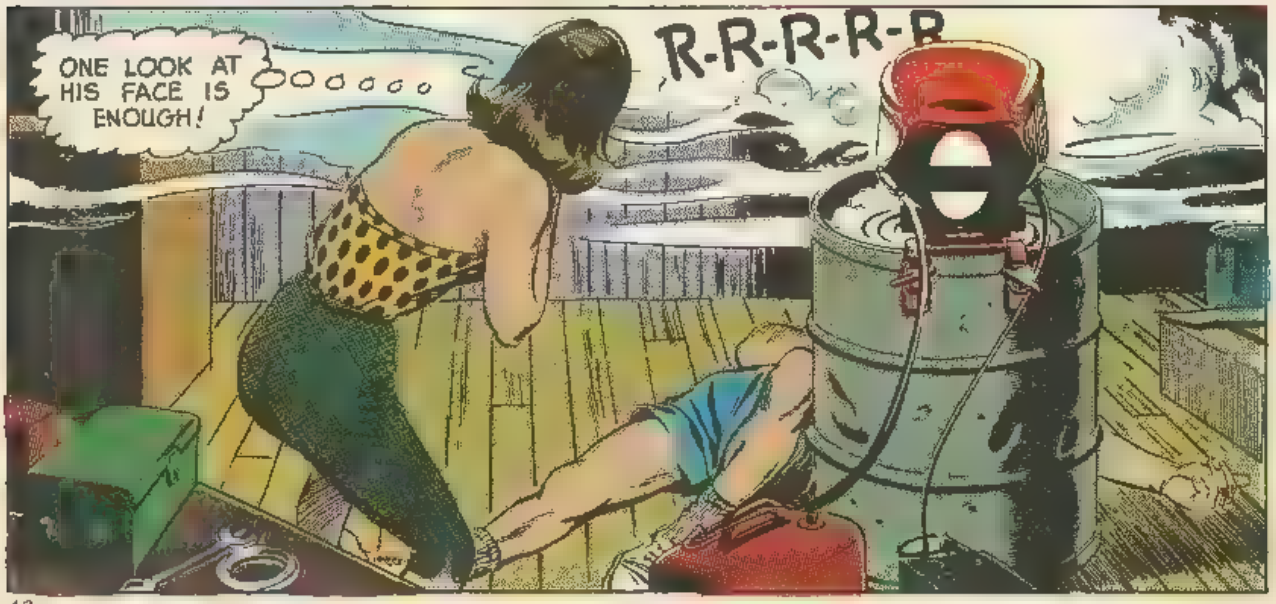
DO KNOW HER NAME, DON'T YOU FRANK?
SURE I I MEAN I DID BUT IT SEEMS TO HAVE SLIPPED MY MIND!
THERE, FRANK.. THAT'S A GOOD BOY!
FUNNY ALL OF A SUDDEN HIS VOICE AND MOOD CHANGED! I'D BETTER GO DOWN AND CHECK WITH HIM IN PERSON!
FRANK, YOU WERE GOING TO SHOW ME THAT NEW TWIN ENGINE JOB YOU WERE REPAIRING!
SURE IT'S RIGHT IN THERE!
TART T FRANK!
OKAY, BUT IT'S A LITTLE N HERE AND SHE KICKS UP A OF CARBON MONOXIDE
R-R-R-R-R

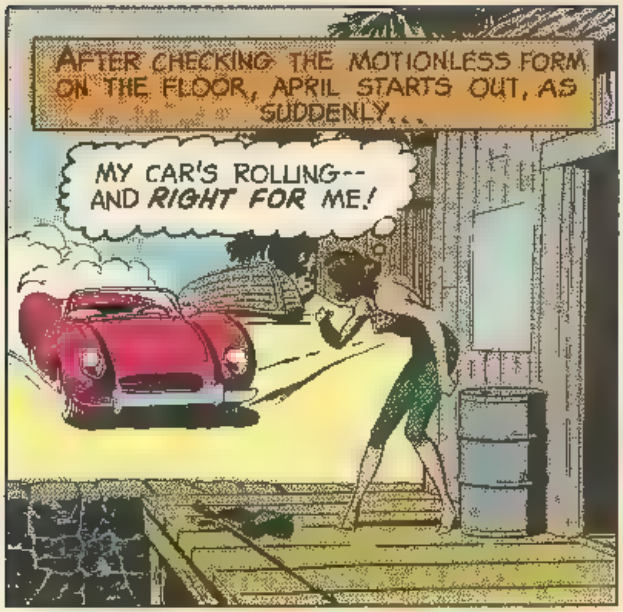

WAIT FOR ME, FRANK! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK! I'LL JUST CLOSE THE DOOR!
BUT THESE FUMES...
RRR

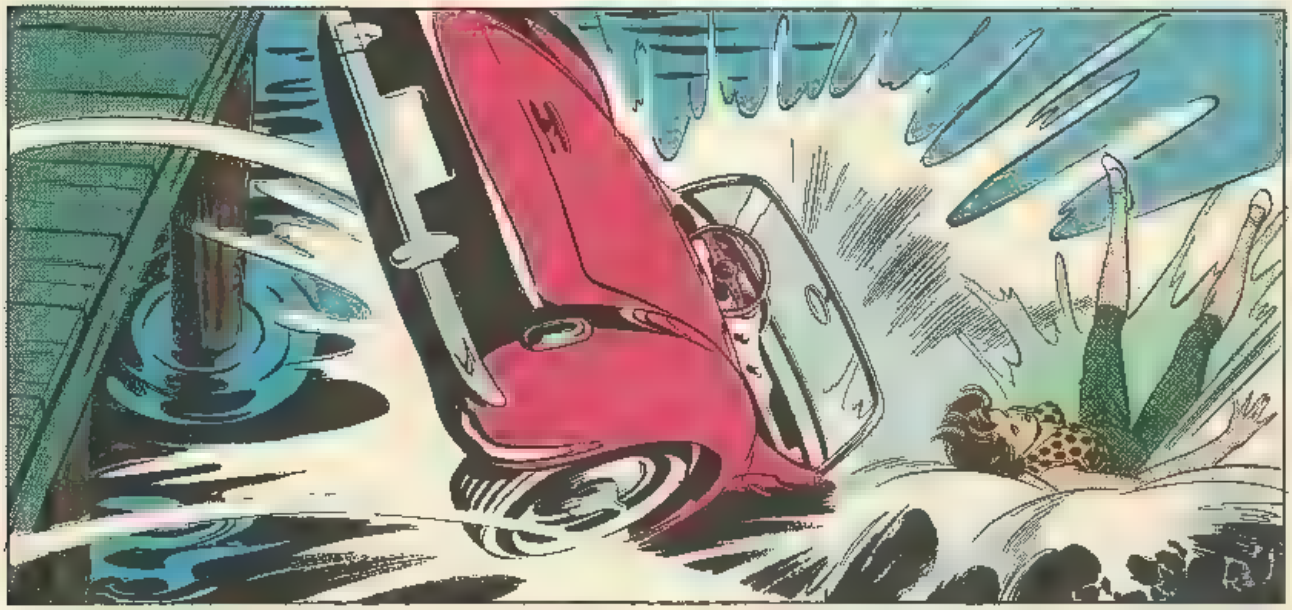

WHY, FRANK, HOW COULD A GREAT, BIG, STRONG MAN LIKE YOU WORRY ABOUT SOME SILLY LITTLE FUMES?
YEAH... THAT *IS* SILLY!

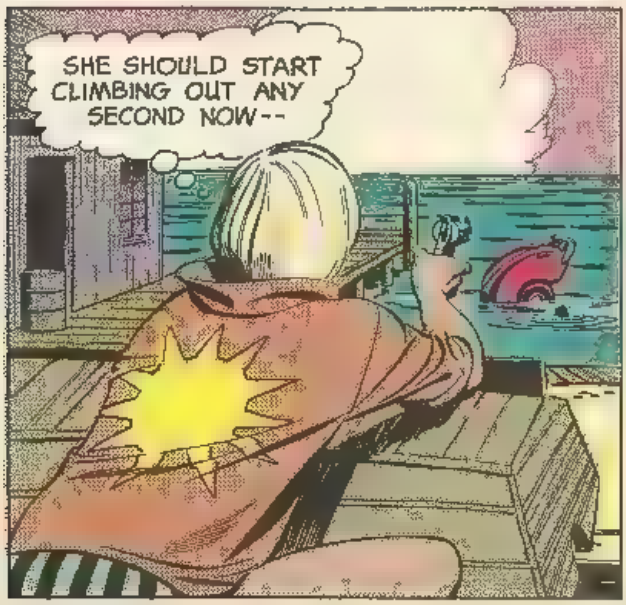

APRIL DANCER ARRIVES MOMENTS LATER...
FRANK...HELLO! ANYONE HOME?

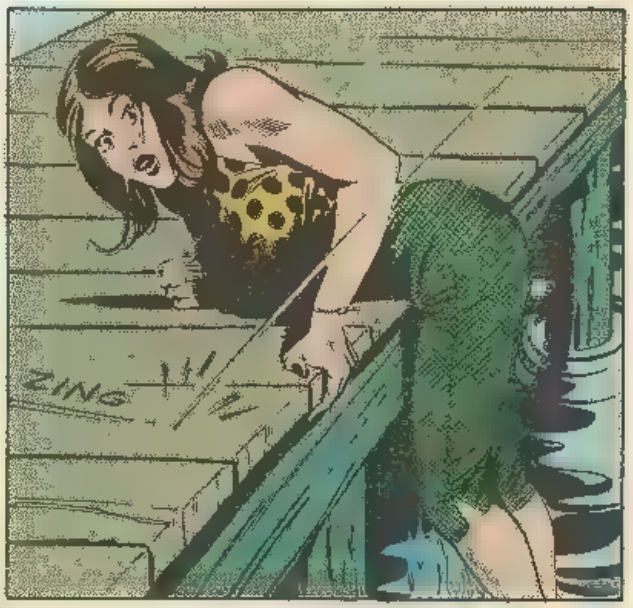
MAYBE SOMEONE'S IN HERE, BUT THAT MOTOR'S MAKING TOO MUCH NOISE FOR HIM TO HEAR ME!

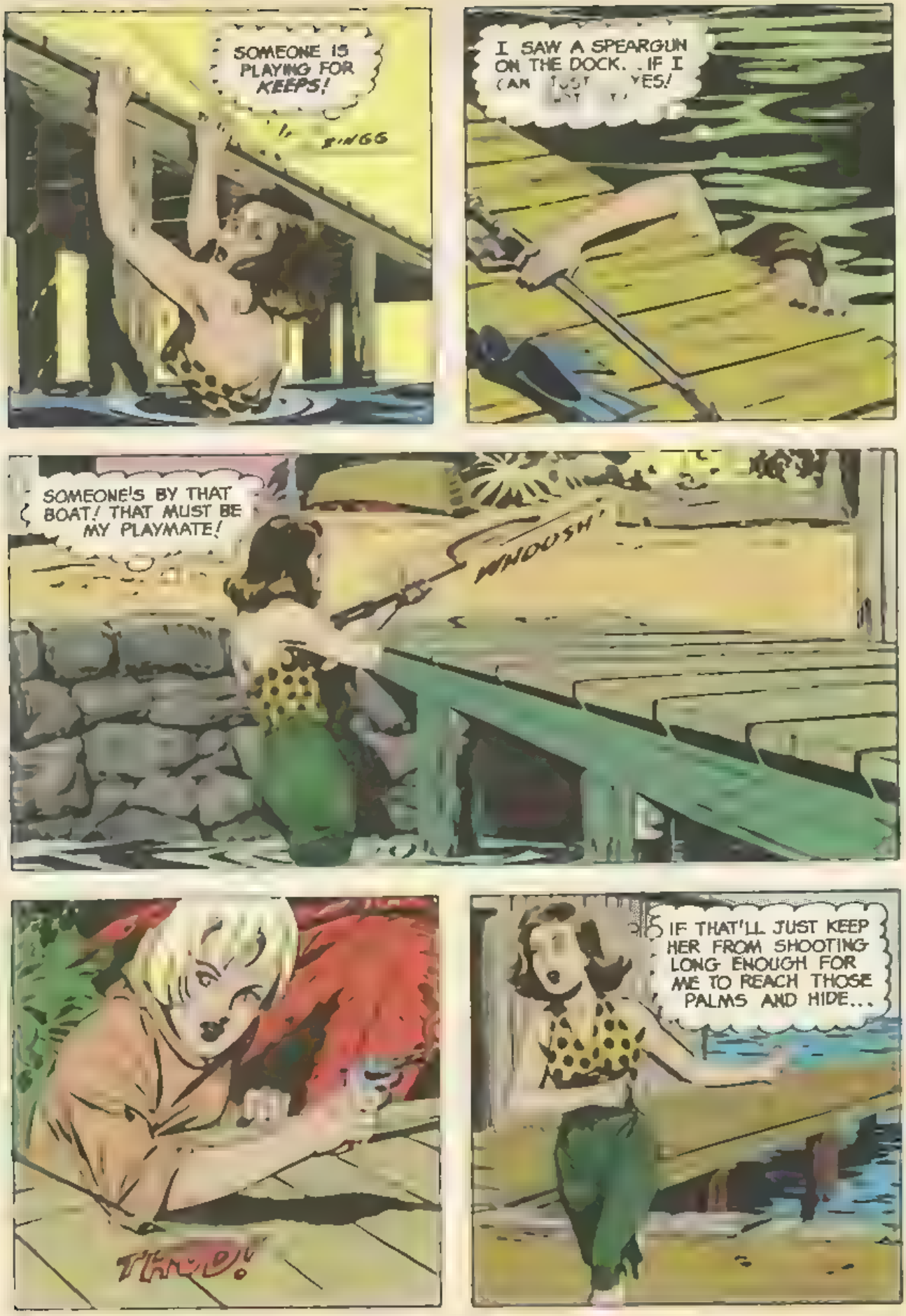

ONE LOOK AT HIS FACE IS ENOUGH!
R-R-R-R-R


AFTER CHECKING THE MOTIONLESS FORM ON THE FLOOR, APRIL STARTS OUT, AS SUDDENLY...
MY CAR'S ROLLING-- AND *RIGHT FOR* ME!

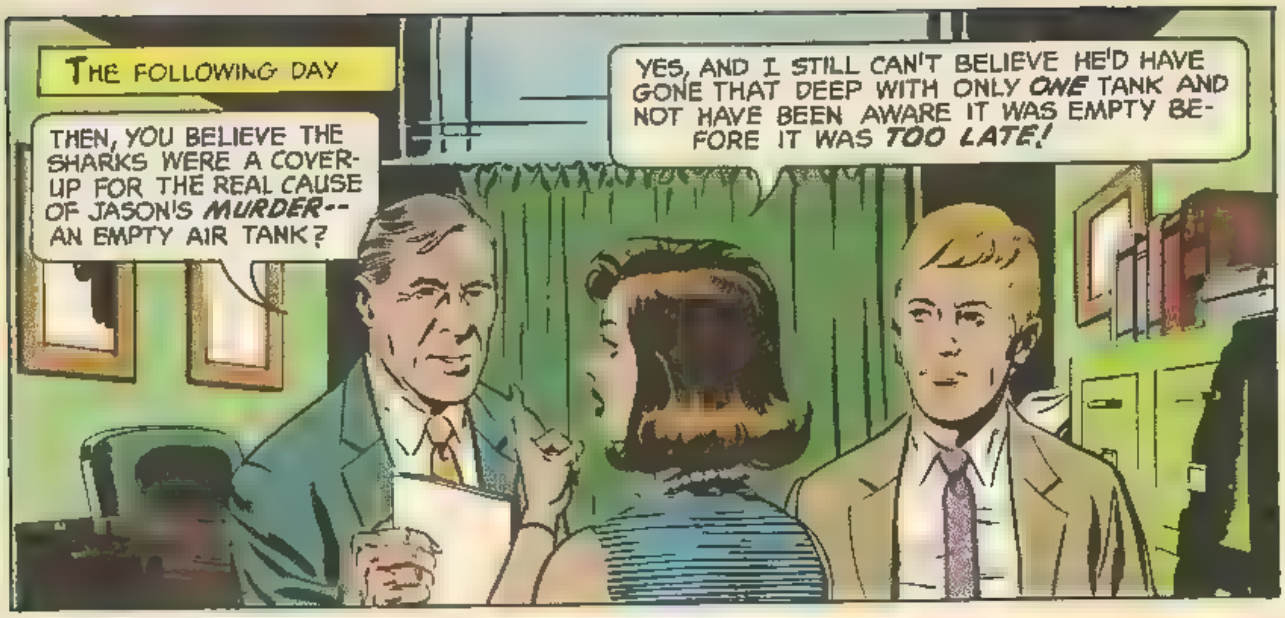


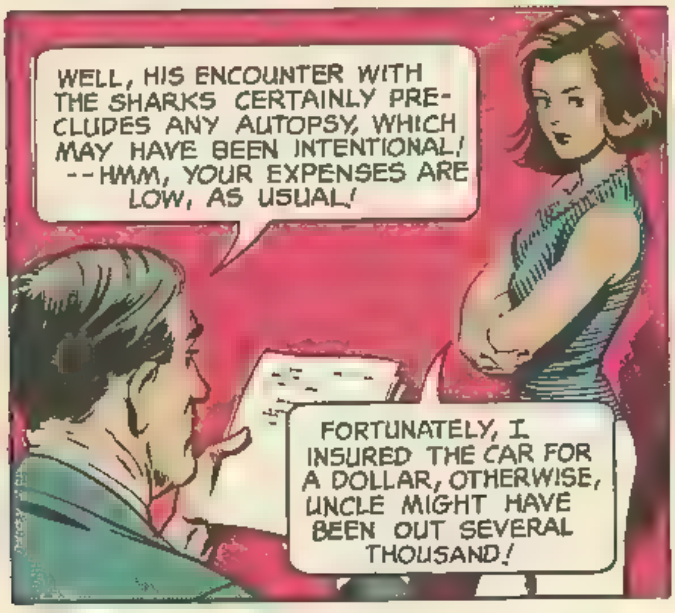

SHE SHOULD START CLIMBING OUT ANY SECOND NOW--


ZING!!


SOMEONE IS PLAYING FOR KEEPS!
RINGG
I SAW A SPEARGUN ON THE DOCK. . IF I
YES!
SOMEONE'S BY THAT BOAT! THAT MUST BE MY PLAYMATE!
WHOOSH
THUD!
IF THAT'LL JUST KEEP HER FROM SHOOTING LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO REACH THOSE PALMS AND HIDE...

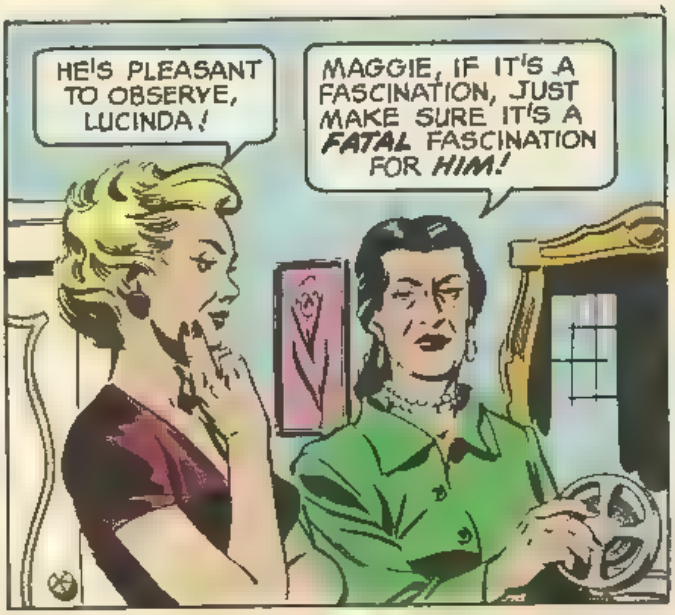
NO POINT TRYING TO DUCK BACK AND GET THE DROP ON HER! WHEN I HAVEN'T A GUN THE ADVANTAGES ARE ALL ON HER SIDE!
BUT IT'S DARK ENOUGH NOW TO HIDE HERE!
LATER...
THE JOB WENT PERFECTLY! LUCINDA, THAT UNCLE AGENT SEEMED TO BE FATALLY ATTRACTIVE TO SHARKS!
CHARMING! AND HOW DID YOUR OTHER ASSIGNMENT GO?
SPLENDIDLY! THE ACCOUNT YOU HAD ME MODELLING THE WATER SKIS FOR WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THE PHOTO!
GOOD! NOW COME HOME LIKE A DEAR! I MAY HAVE MORE WORK FOR YOU!
WHILE I'M RETURNING, RUN DOWN A LEAD! SOMEONE MADE THINGS A LITTLE STICKY FOR ME HERE! CHECK OUT A MISS APRIL DANCER!


THE FOLLOWING DAY
THEN, YOU BELIEVE THE SHARKS WERE A COVER-UP FOR THE REAL CAUSE OF JASON'S MURDER-- AN EMPTY AIR TANK?
YES, AND I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE HE'D HAVE GONE THAT DEEP WITH ONLY ONE TANK AND NOT HAVE BEEN AWARE IT WAS EMPTY BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE!

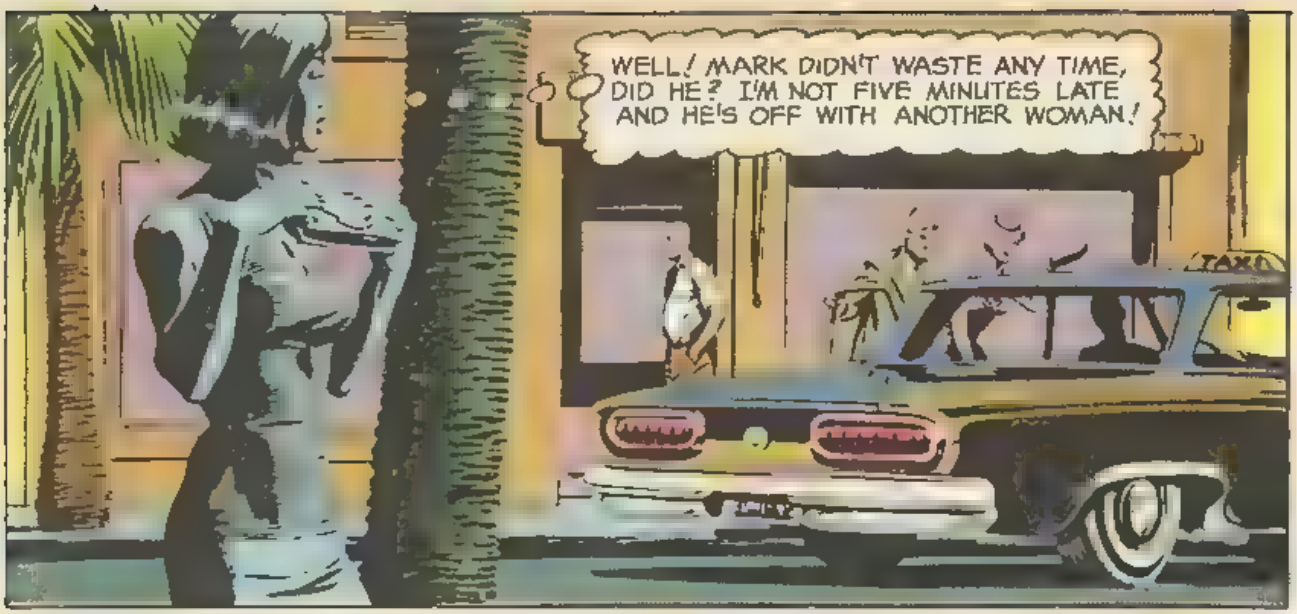

WELL, HIS ENCOUNTER WITH THE SHARKS CERTAINLY PRECLUDES ANY AUTOPSY, WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN INTENTIONAL! --HMM, YOUR EXPENSES ARE LOW, AS USUAL!
FORTUNATELY, I INSURED THE CAR FOR A DOLLAR, OTHERWISE, UNCLE MIGHT HAVE BEEN OUT SEVERAL THOUSAND!

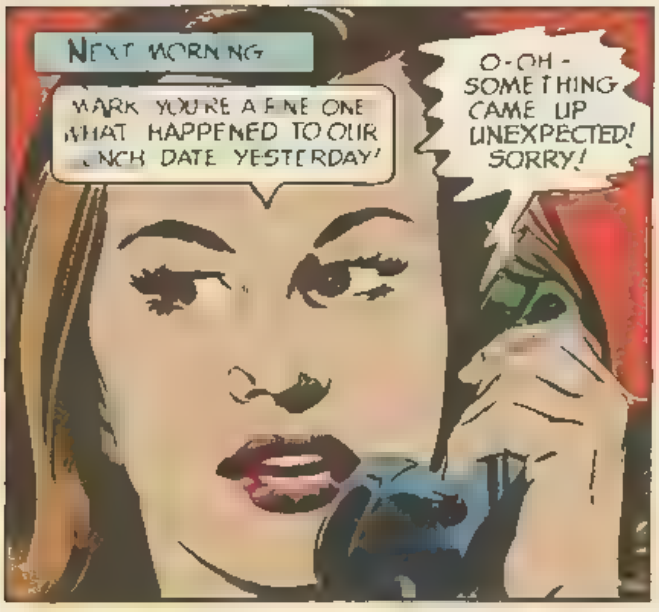
AND YOUR FEMALE ASSAILANT?
MY ONLY LEAD TO HER WAS DEAD BY THE TIME I REACHED HIM! ANOTHER ACCIDENT!

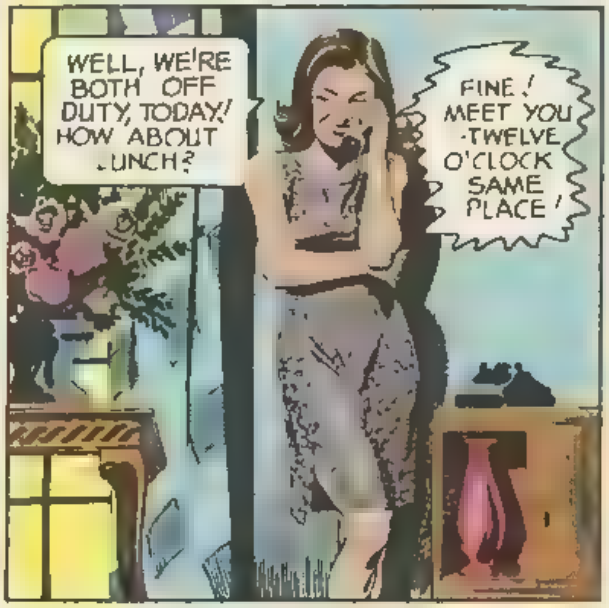
ELSEWHERE...
OBSERVE HIM CAREFULLY, HE IS MARK SLATE AND HE IS YOUR TARGET!


HE'S PLEASANT TO OBSERVE, LUCINDA!
MAGGIE, IF IT'S A FASCINATION, JUST MAKE SURE IT'S A FATAL FASCINATION FOR HIM!

HOW ABOUT LUNCH, APRIL? MEET YOU IN AN HOUR BY BOLAN'S
FINE! I'LL BE THERE IN AN HOUR! I'VE A FEW DETAILS TO FINISH UP HERE
AN HOUR LATER
THE WAY HE'S BEEN WAITING FOR SOMEONE AND I MIGHT AS WELL BE ME!
BOOK
BET YOU'RE WAITING FOR SOMEONE, TOO-- AND THEY'RE LATE!
I'M SURE A BIG, HANDSOME FELLOW LIKE YOU DOESN'T HAVE TO WAIT FOREVER FOR HIS DATE! WHY DON'T WE GO OFF TOGETHER AND SHOW THEM?

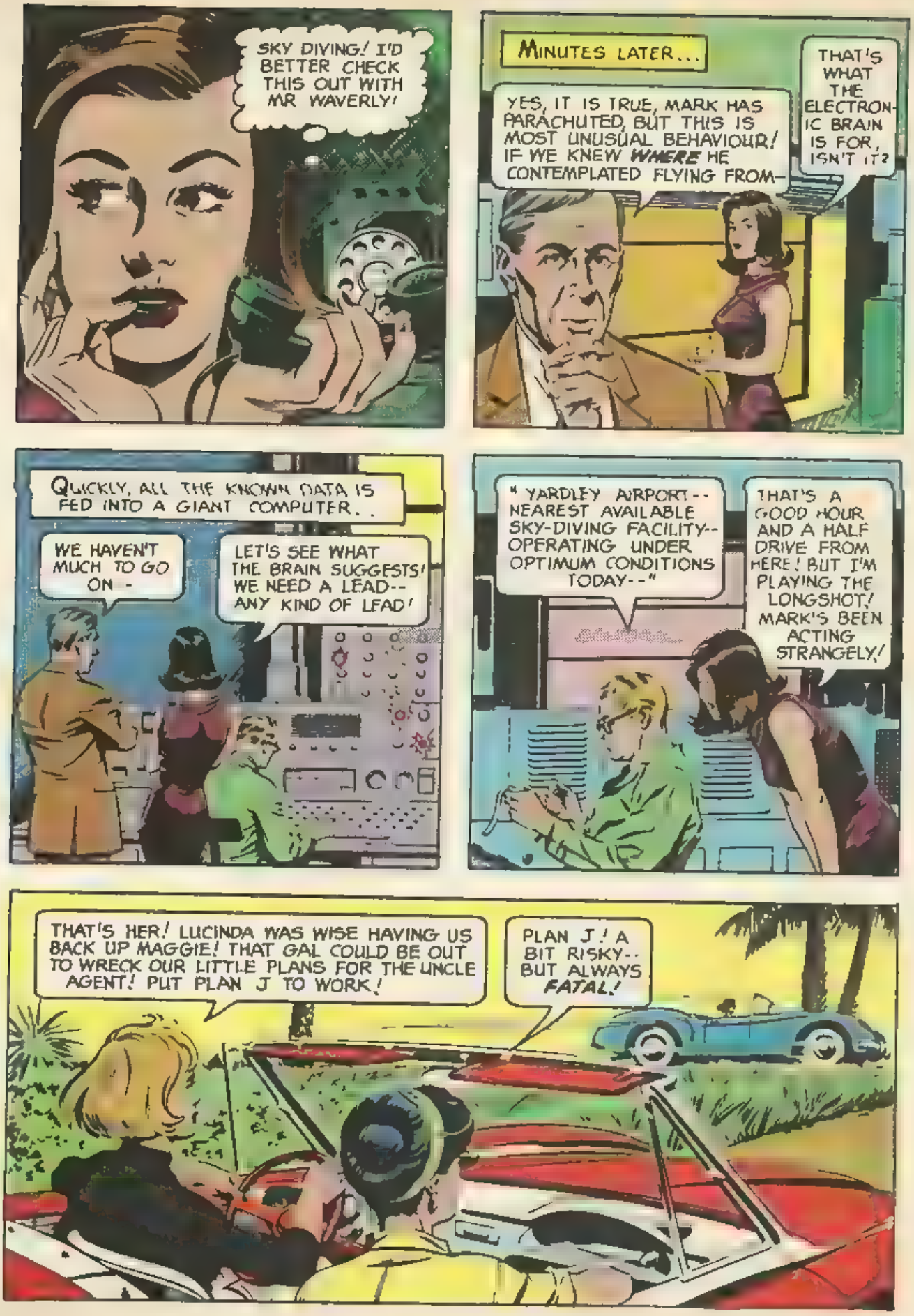

WELL! MARK DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME, DID HE? I'M NOT FIVE MINUTES LATE AND HE'S OFF WITH ANOTHER WOMAN!
TAXI

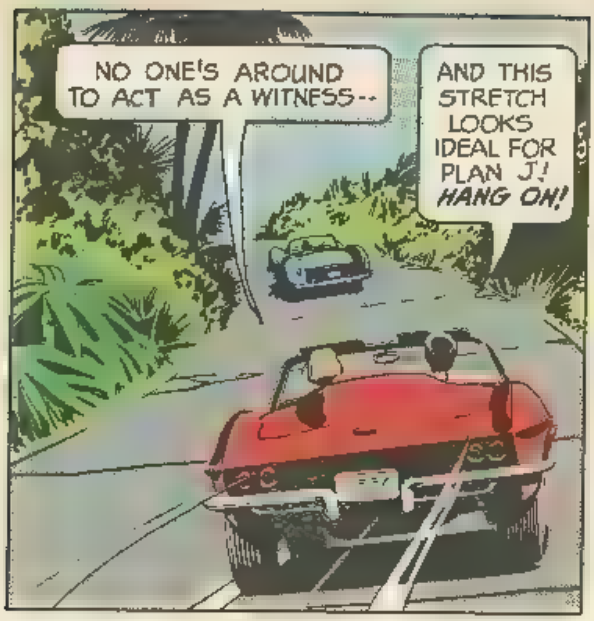

NEXT MORNING
MARK YOU'RE A FINE ONE WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR LUNCH DATE YESTERDAY!
O-OH - SOMETHING CAME UP UNEXPECTED! SORRY!

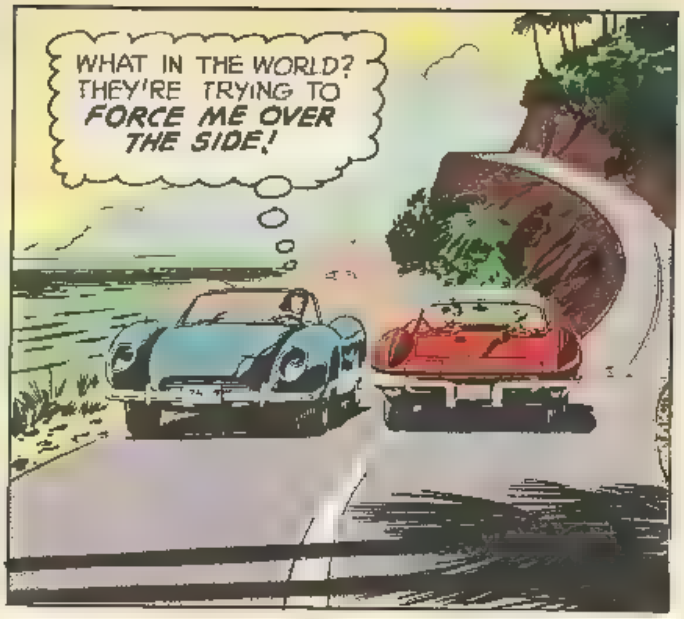

WELL, WE'RE BOTH OFF DUTY, TODAY! HOW ABOUT LUNCH?
FINE! MEET YOU -TWELVE O'CLOCK SAME PLACE!

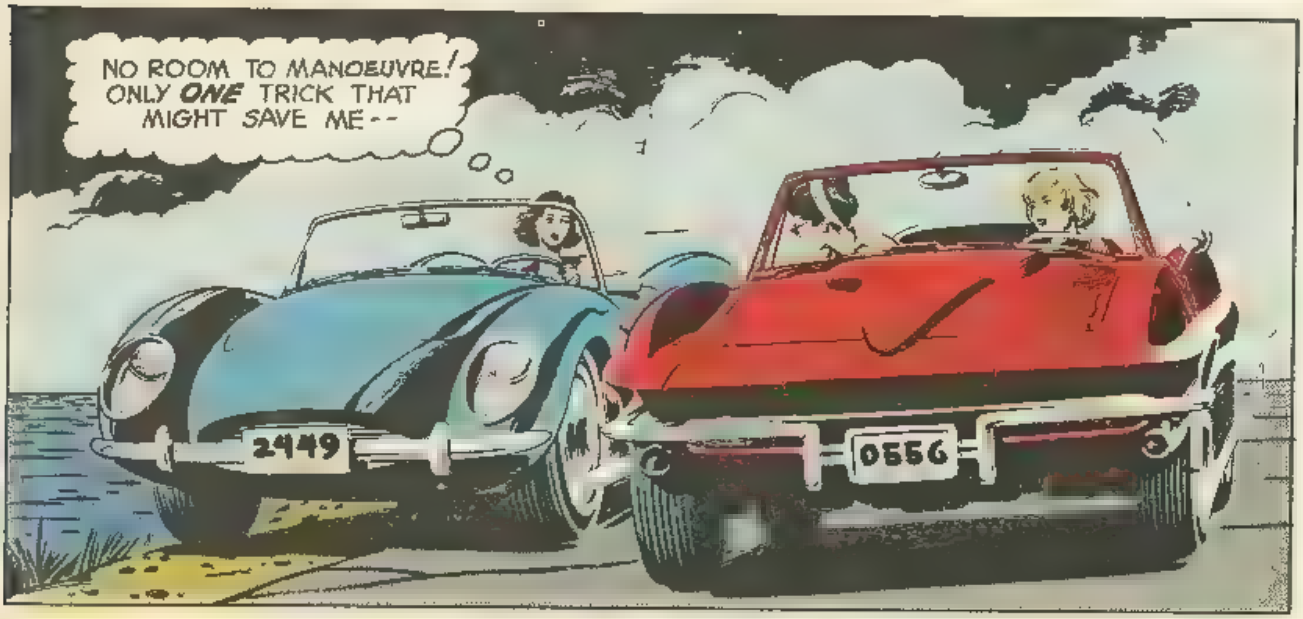
LATER
TWENTY PAST TWELVE IT'S NOT LIKE MARK! I'LL CHECK MY MESSAGE CENTRE!

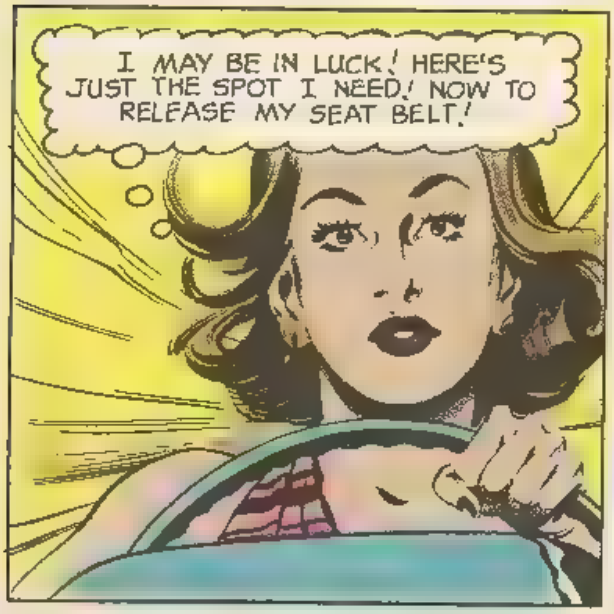
AS APRIL PHONES INTO A SPECIAL NUMBER AT UNCLE HEADQUARTERS...
YES, THERE IS A MESSAGE! "SORRY! DECIDED TO GO SKY DIVING-- MARK!"

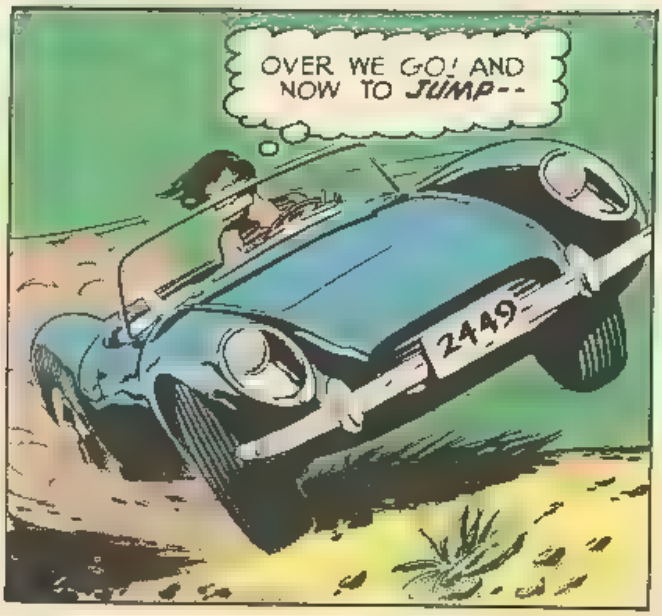

SKY DIVING! I'D BETTER CHECK THIS OUT WITH MR WAVERLY!
MINUTES LATER...
YES, IT IS TRUE, MARK HAS PARACHUTED, BUT THIS IS MOST UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR! IF WE KNEW WHERE HE CONTEMPLATED FLYING FROM—
THAT'S WHAT THE ELECTRONIC BRAIN IS FOR, ISN'T IT?
QUICKLY, ALL THE KNOWN DATA IS FED INTO A GIANT COMPUTER..
WE HAVEN'T MUCH TO GO ON -
LET'S SEE WHAT THE BRAIN SUGGESTS! WE NEED A LEAD-- ANY KIND OF LEAD!
"YARDLEY AIRPORT-- NEAREST AVAILABLE SKY-DIVING FACILITY-- OPERATING UNDER OPTIMUM CONDITIONS TODAY--"
THAT'S A GOOD HOUR AND A HALF DRIVE FROM HERE! BUT I'M PLAYING THE LONGSHOT! MARK'S BEEN ACTING STRANGELY!
THAT'S HER! LUCINDA WAS WISE HAVING US BACK UP MAGGIE! THAT GAL COULD BE OUT TO WRECK OUR LITTLE PLANS FOR THE UNCLE AGENT! PUT PLAN J TO WORK!
PLAN J! A BIT RISKY-- BUT ALWAYS FATAL!


NO ONE'S AROUND TO ACT AS A WITNESS--
AND THIS STRETCH LOOKS IDEAL FOR PLAN J! HANG ON!


WHAT IN THE WORLD? THEY'RE TRYING TO FORCE ME OVER THE SIDE!


NO ROOM TO MANOEUVRE! ONLY ONE TRICK THAT MIGHT SAVE ME--
2449
0556


I MAY BE IN LUCK! HERE'S JUST THE SPOT I NEED! NOW TO RELEASE MY SEAT BELT!

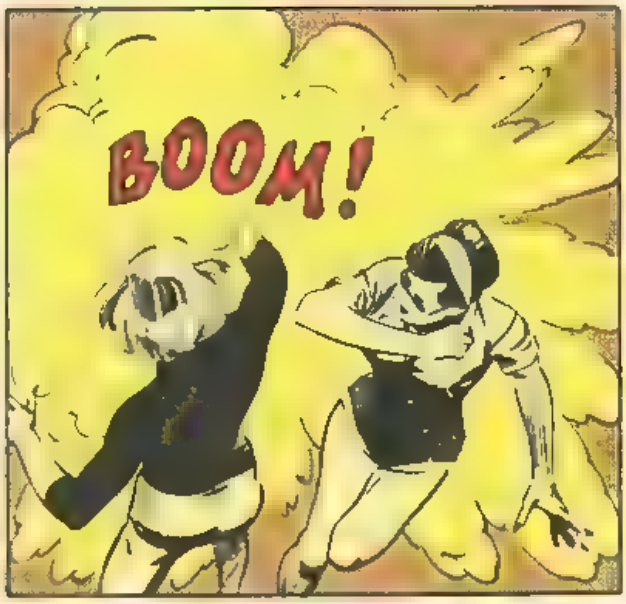

OVER WE GO! AND NOW TO JUMP--
2449

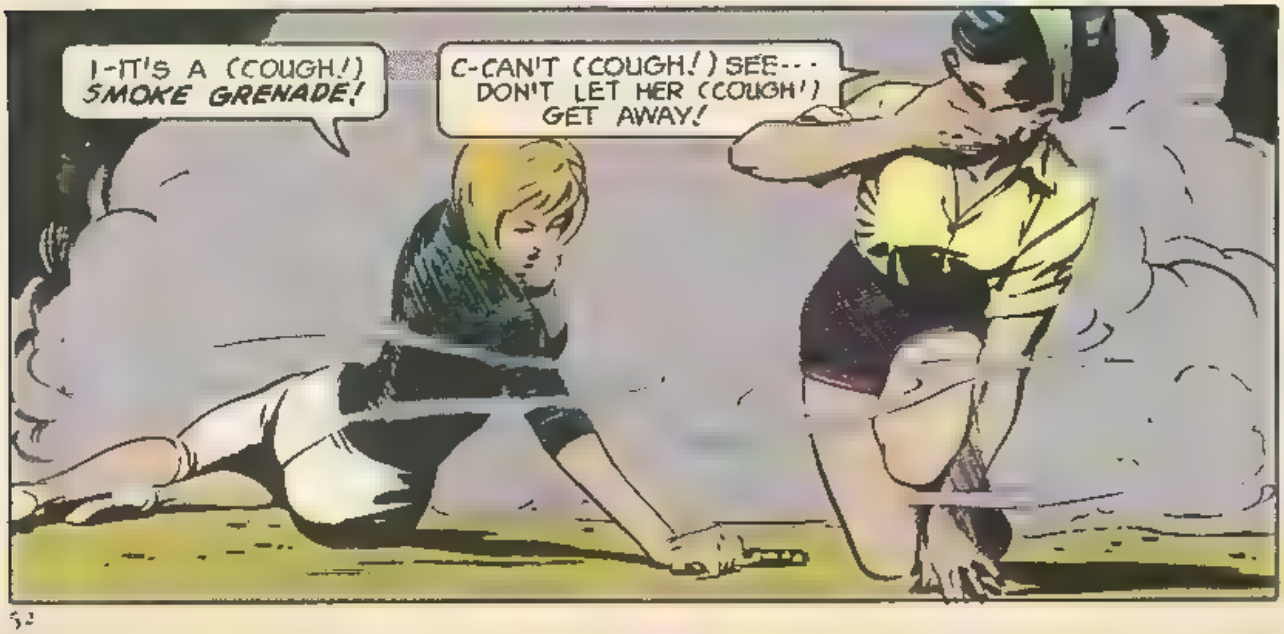
HERE'S HOPING I FIGURED RIGHT AND THESE BUSHES BREAK MY FALL--
SAFE!--BUT THANK GOODNESS THESE DAMAGED CARS ARE RENTED AND DON'T BELONG TO UNCLE!
THEN, IN A SEEMINGLY ETERNAL FEMALE GESTURE, APRIL DANCER OPENS HER PURSE, TAKING OUT HER LIPSTICK ..
THERE! ANTENNA UP... NOW TO CONTACT HEAD-QUARTERS AND GET HELP!

THEY'VE SPOTTED ME! AND THE ODDS *AREN'T* IN MY FAVOUR!

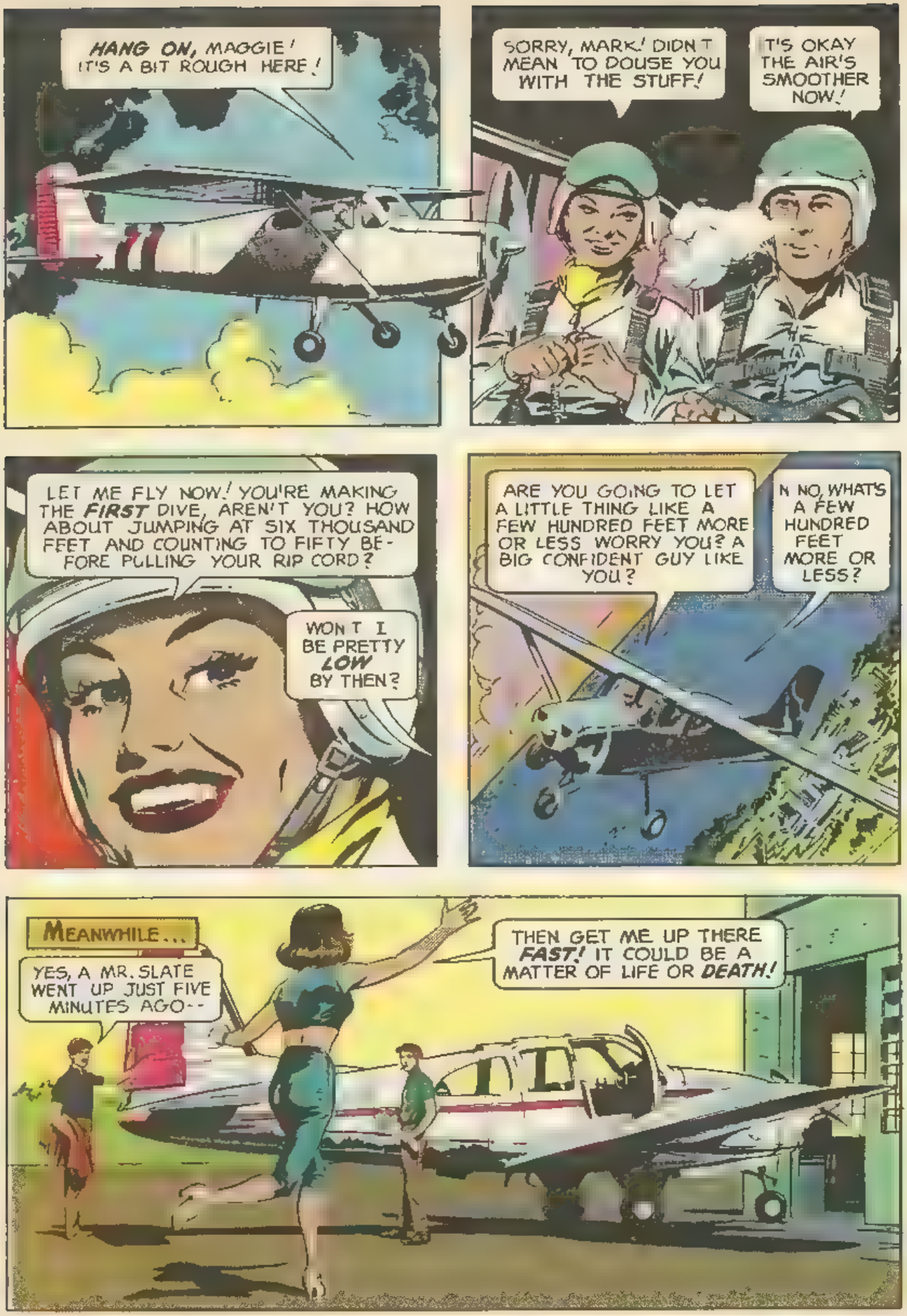
QUICKLY, APRIL PULLS THE SEEMINGLY INNOCENT POWDER PUFF FROM HER COMPACT..
THIS BETTER GIVE ME THE *COVER* I NEED!

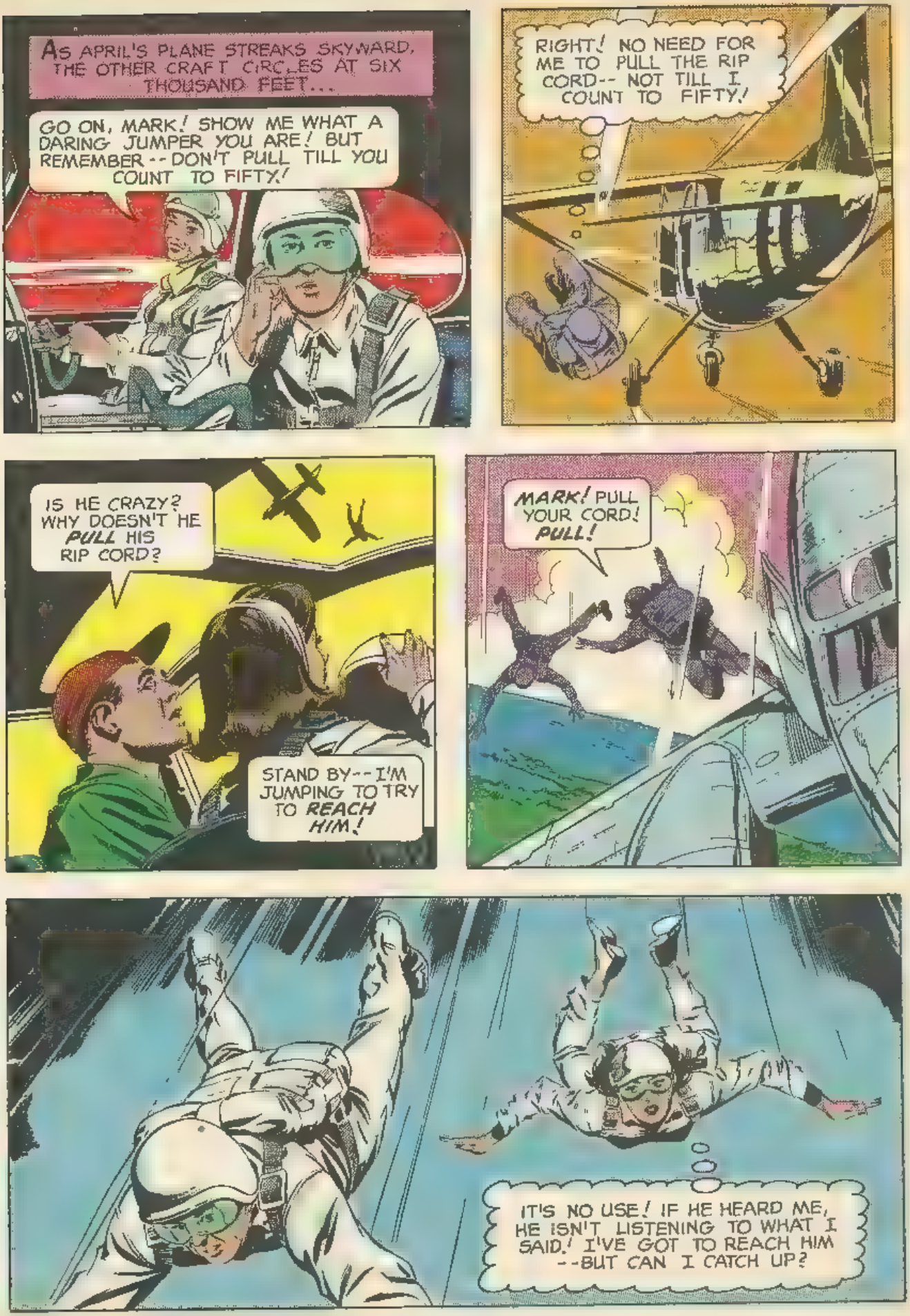
I'LL ONLY GET ONE TRY WITH THIS TRICK -


BOOM!

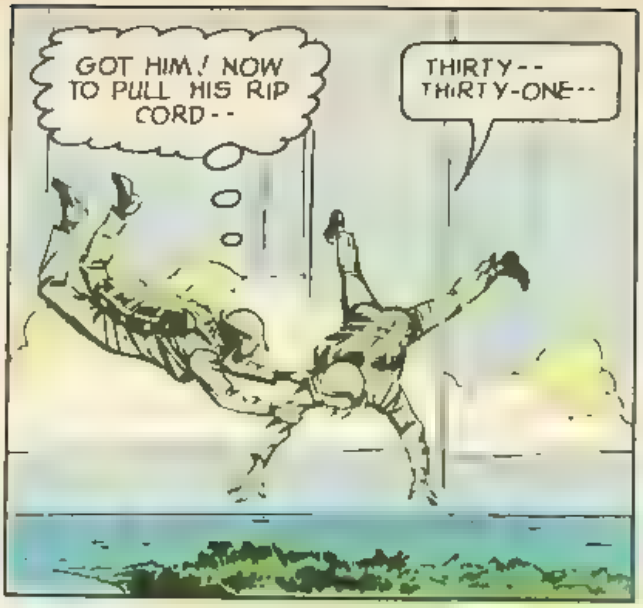

I-IT'S A (COUGH!) *SMOKE GRENADE!*
C-CAN'T (COUGH!) SEE--- DON'T LET HER (COUGH!) GET AWAY!

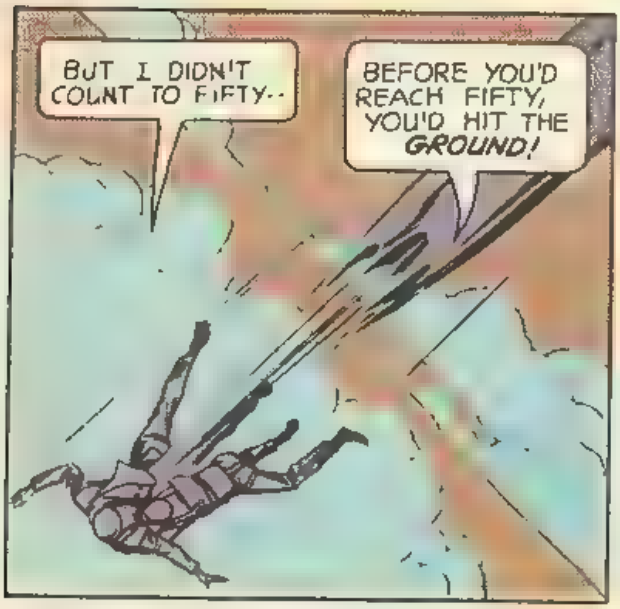
I'M IN LUCK! THE KEY IS IN THE IGNITION!
NOW TO CLEAR OUT BEFORE THE SMOKE CLEARS!
THERE SHE GOES! SWOOT HER!
SAFE! THIS HILL WILL SHIELD ME TILL I'M OUT OF RANGE! BUT I WONDER WHAT'S HAPPENING TO MARK?
LIKE A LITTLE PERFUME TO GIV


HANG ON, MAGGIE! IT'S A BIT ROUGH HERE!
SORRY, MARK! DIDN'T MEAN TO DOUSE YOU WITH THE STUFF!
IT'S OKAY THE AIR'S SMOOTHER NOW!
LET ME FLY NOW! YOU'RE MAKING THE FIRST DIVE, AREN'T YOU? HOW ABOUT JUMPING AT SIX THOUSAND FEET AND COUNTING TO FIFTY BEFORE PULLING YOUR RIP CORD?
WON'T I BE PRETTY LOW BY THEN?
ARE YOU GOING TO LET A LITTLE THING LIKE A FEW HUNDRED FEET MORE OR LESS WORRY YOU? A BIG CONFIDENT GUY LIKE YOU?
N NO, WHAT'S A FEW HUNDRED FEET MORE OR LESS?
MEANWHILE...
YES, A MR. SLATE WENT UP JUST FIVE MINUTES AGO--
THEN GET ME UP THERE FAST! IT COULD BE A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH!

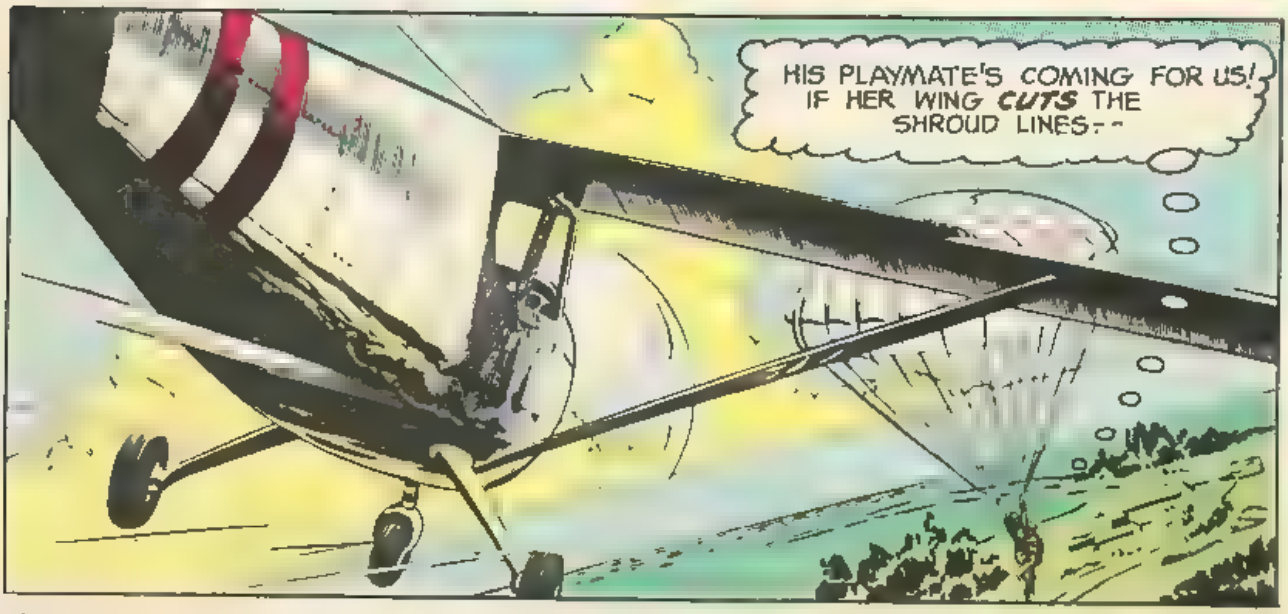

AS APRIL'S PLANE STREAKS SKYWARD, THE OTHER CRAFT CIRCLES AT SIX THOUSAND FEET...
GO ON, MARK! SHOW ME WHAT A DARING JUMPER YOU ARE! BUT REMEMBER--DON'T PULL TILL YOU COUNT TO FIFTY!
RIGHT! NO NEED FOR ME TO PULL THE RIP CORD-- NOT TILL I COUNT TO FIFTY!
IS HE CRAZY? WHY DOESN'T HE PULL HIS RIP CORD?
STAND BY--I'M JUMPING TO TRY TO REACH HIM!
MARK! PULL YOUR CORD! PULL!
IT'S NO USE! IF HE HEARD ME, HE ISN'T LISTENING TO WHAT I SAID! I'VE GOT TO REACH HIM --BUT CAN I CATCH UP?

GAINING-- BUT NOT MUCH TIME LEFT--


GOT HIM! NOW TO PULL HIS RIP CORD--
THIRTY-- THIRTY-ONE--

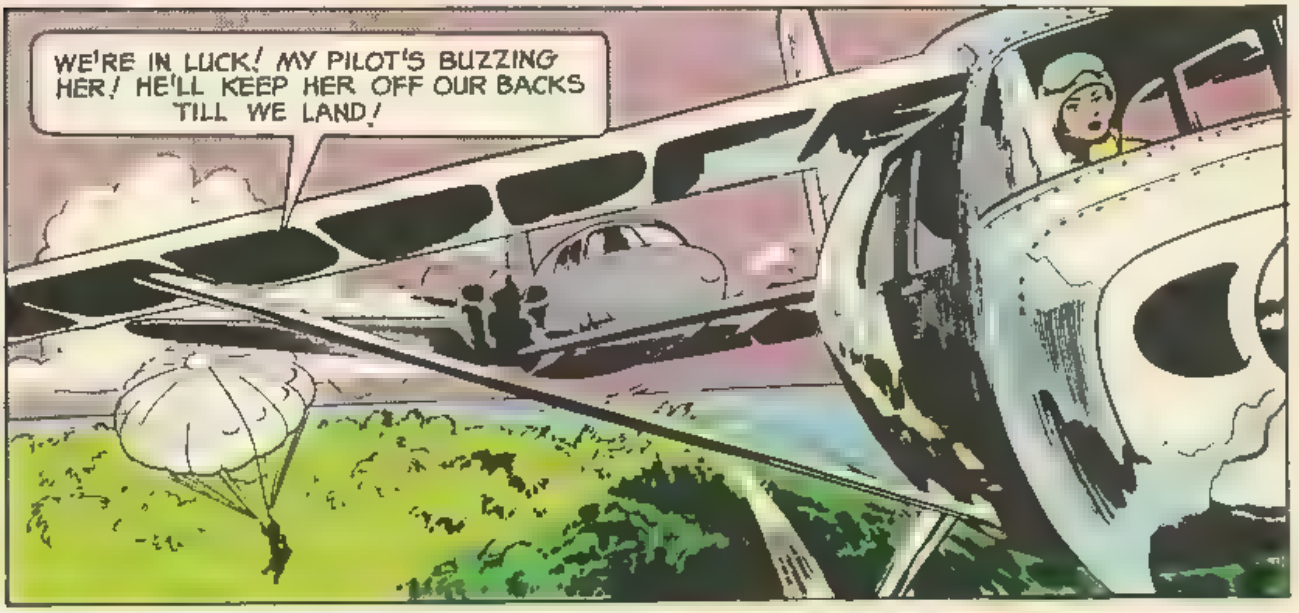

BUT I DIDN'T COUNT TO FIFTY--
BEFORE YOU'D REACH FIFTY, YOU'D HIT THE GROUND!

THERE! NOW HOLD ONTO ME WHILE I HANG ONTO YOU! WE'RE GOING DOWN FAST!


HIS PLAYMATE'S COMING FOR US! IF HER WING CUTS THE SHROUD LINES--

MARK, LISTEN TO ME! PULL THE LEFT HAND LINES HARD!
PULL-- HARD!

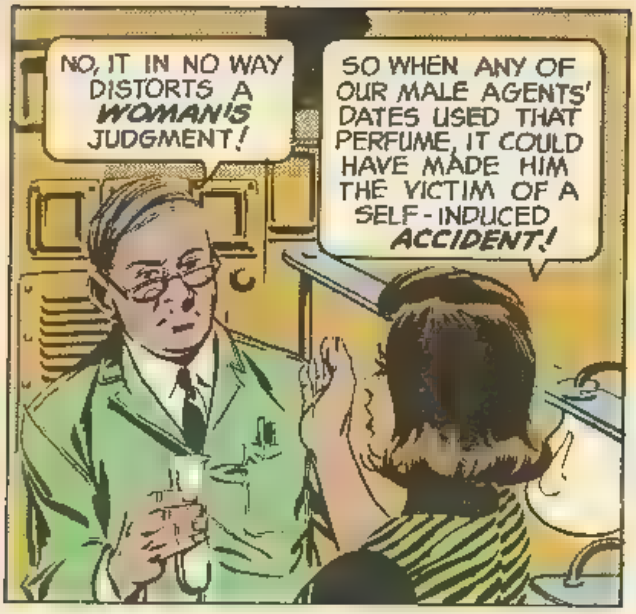
GOOD! THAT DID IT--UNLESS SHE TRIES AGAIN!

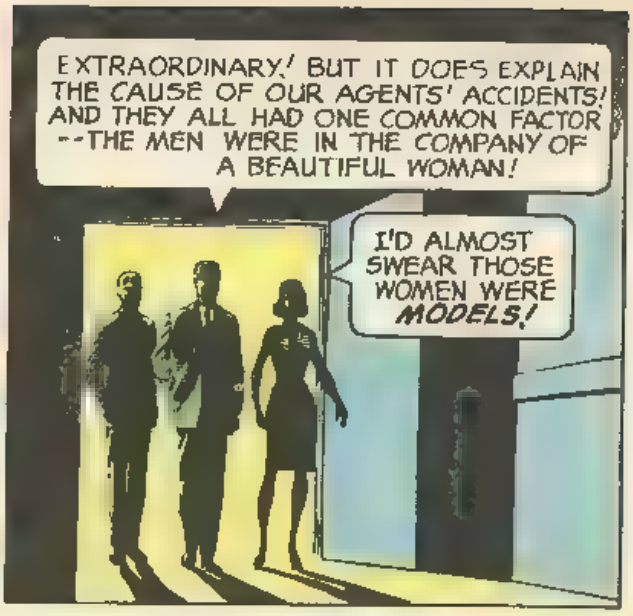

WE'RE IN LUCK! MY PILOT'S BUZZING HER! HE'LL KEEP HER OFF OUR BACKS TILL WE LAND!

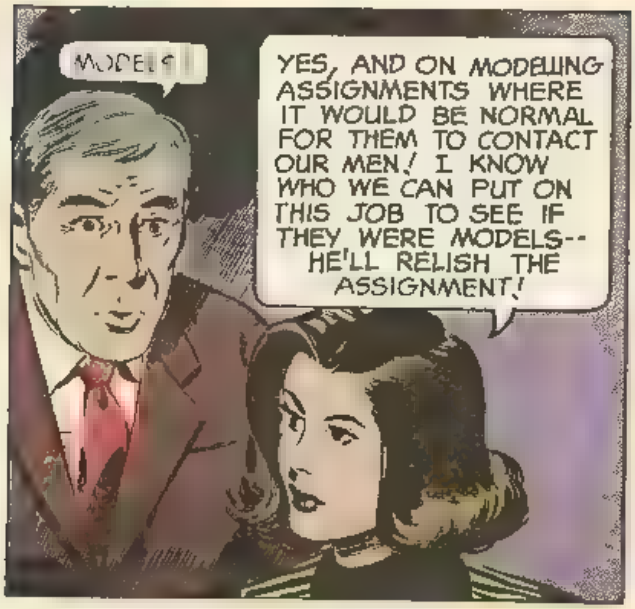
GET READY TO HIT!

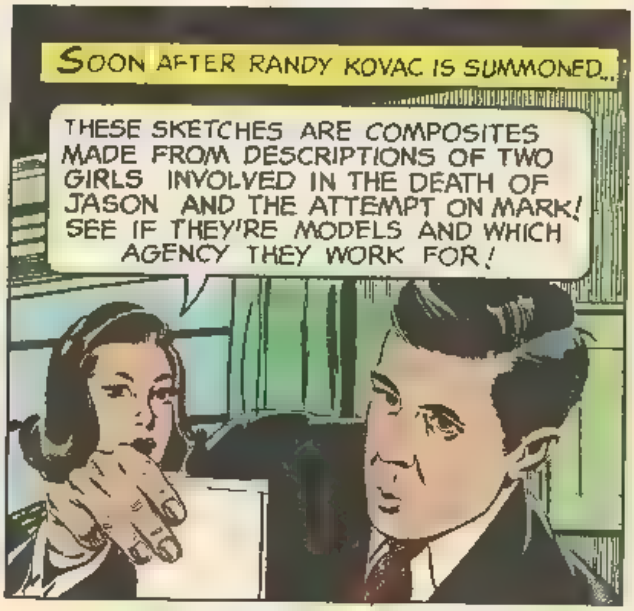
GOT TO ROLL CLEAR BEFORE MARK LANDS ON ME---

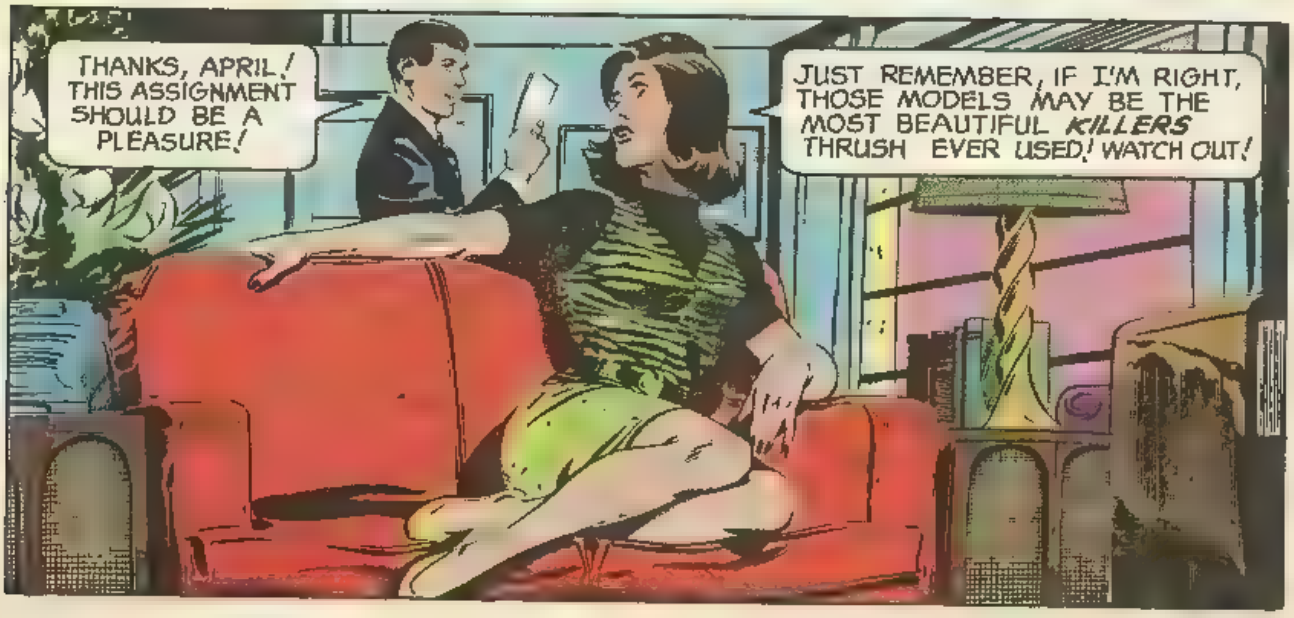
WITH SPLIT-SECOND TIMING, APRIL MAKES A PERFECT PARA-CHUTIST'S ROLL.
NOW, MARK, WHY WERE YOU DELAYING PULLING THE RIP CORD SO LONG?
S SHE TOLD ME--TO COUNT TO FIFTY --THEN PULL?
BUT DIDN'T YOU REALIZE THAT FROM THAT LOW DROP YOU'D HIT THE GROUND BEFORE YOU EVER REACHED FIFTY?
SHE SAID IT WAS SILLY FOR A BIG, CONFIDENT GUY LIKE ME TO WORRY ABOUT THAT!
FUNNY HE'S TALKING AS IF HE WERE IN A DAZE--DISORIENTED! AND HIS JUMP SUIT REEKS OF PERFUME! MAYBE IT'S JUST WOMAN'S INTUITION, BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE OUR LAB ANALYSE THAT PERFUME!
ABORATORY...
IT'S A STRANGE PERFUME! AFTER BREAKING DOWN ITS COMPONENTS AND MAKING IT OURSELVES, WE DISCOVERED THAT ITS ODOUR AFFECTS MEN'S JUDGMENT!
NOT A WOMAN'S?

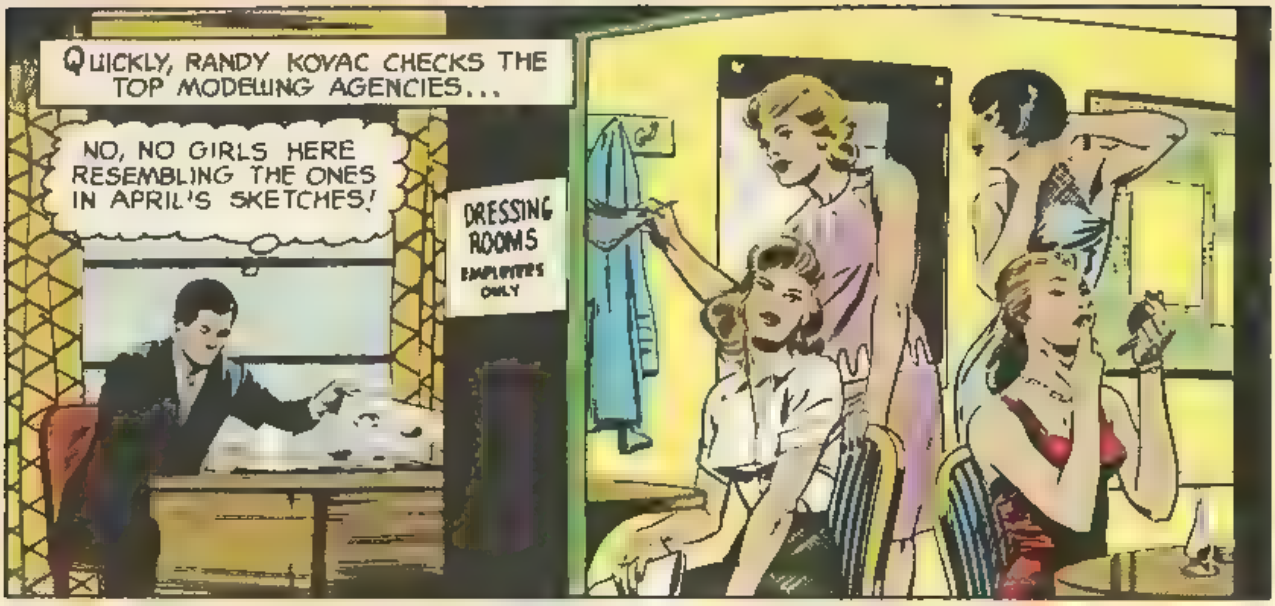

NO, IT IN NO WAY DISTORTS A WOMAN'S JUDGMENT!
SO WHEN ANY OF OUR MALE AGENTS' DATES USED THAT PERFUME, IT COULD HAVE MADE HIM THE VICTIM OF A SELF-INDUCED ACCIDENT!


EXTRAORDINARY! BUT IT DOES EXPLAIN THE CAUSE OF OUR AGENTS' ACCIDENTS! AND THEY ALL HAD ONE COMMON FACTOR --THE MEN WERE IN THE COMPANY OF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN!
I'D ALMOST SWEAR THOSE WOMEN WERE MODELS!

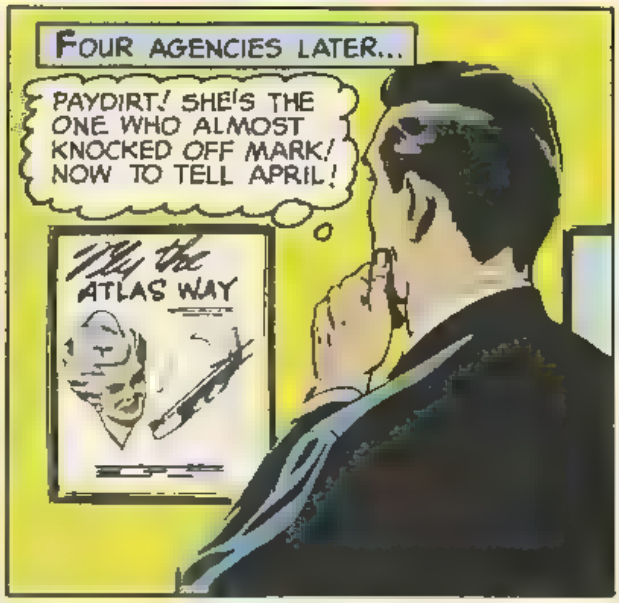

MODELS?
YES, AND ON MODELLING ASSIGNMENTS WHERE IT WOULD BE NORMAL FOR THEM TO CONTACT OUR MEN! I KNOW WHO WE CAN PUT ON THIS JOB TO SEE IF THEY WERE MODELS-- HE'LL RELISH THE ASSIGNMENT!

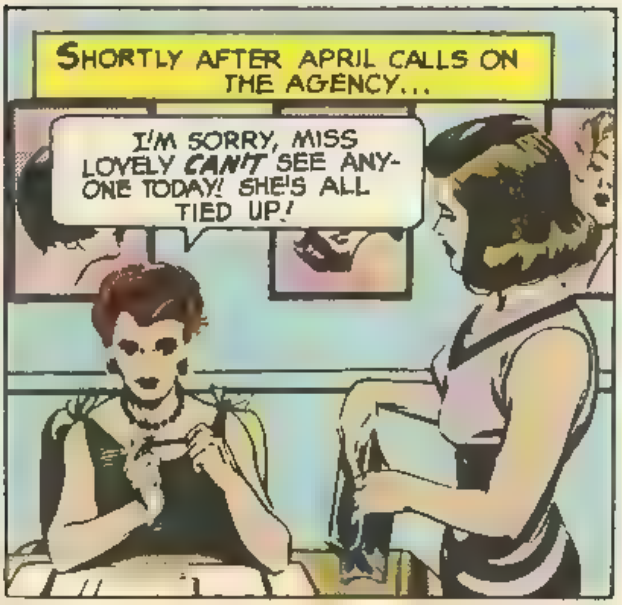

SOON AFTER RANDY KOVAC IS SUMMONED...
THESE SKETCHES ARE COMPOSITES MADE FROM DESCRIPTIONS OF TWO GIRLS INVOLVED IN THE DEATH OF JASON AND THE ATTEMPT ON MARK! SEE IF THEY'RE MODELS AND WHICH AGENCY THEY WORK FOR!


THANKS, APRIL! THIS ASSIGNMENT SHOULD BE A PLEASURE!
JUST REMEMBER, IF I'M RIGHT, THOSE MODELS MAY BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL KILLERS THRUSH EVER USED! WATCH OUT!


QUICKLY, RANDY KOVAC CHECKS THE TOP MODELING AGENCIES...
NO, NO GIRLS HERE RESEMBLING THE ONES IN APRIL'S SKETCHES!
DRESSING ROOMS
EMPLOYEES ONLY

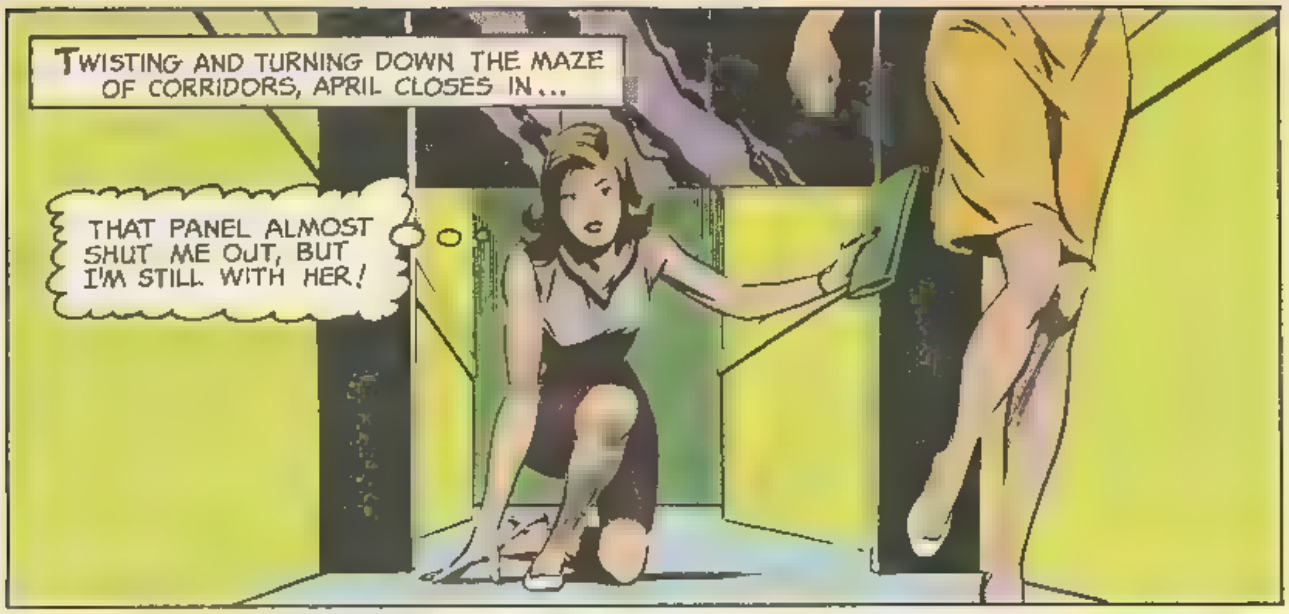
SOON
IT'S A SHAME TO LEAVE, BUT NO LUCK HERE EITHER!

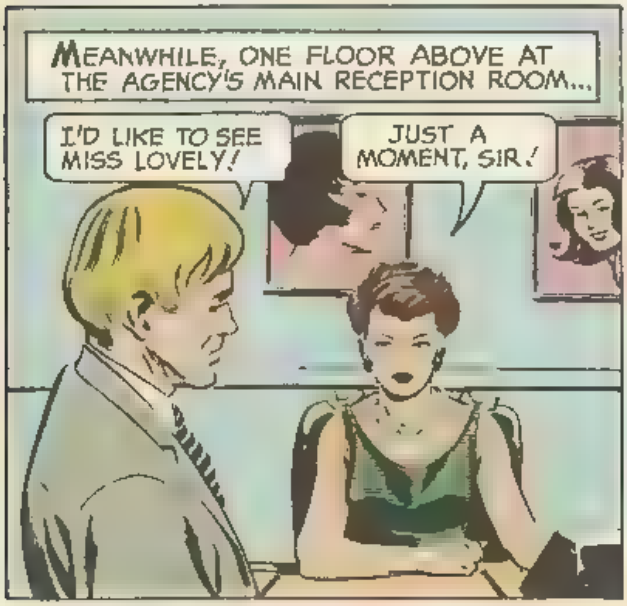

FOUR AGENCIES LATER...
PAYDIRT! SHE'S THE ONE WHO ALMOST KNOCKED OFF MARK! NOW TO TELL APRIL!
the ATLAS WAY


SHORTLY AFTER APRIL CALLS ON THE AGENCY...
I'M SORRY, MISS LOVELY CAN'T SEE ANY-ONE TODAY! SHE'S ALL TIED UP!

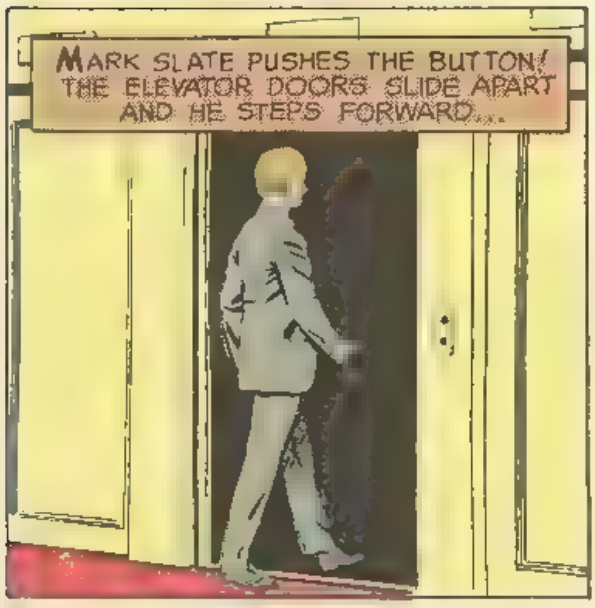
OOOOH!
TRY OUR PERFUME -- ESSENCE OF UNCLE! AND WHEN I GET THROUGH WITH MISS LOVELY, SHE WON'T BE TIED UP, SHE'LL BE HANDCUFFED!

OFFICE! I JUST WON'T BOTHER TO KNOCK!
UNCLE!
A WORD WITH HER!
B
H-HEY!
YOU, MAGGIE,
HONEY... AND
VISIT WILL BE A
ONE-WAY TRIP!


TWISTING AND TURNING DOWN THE MAZE OF CORRIDORS, APRIL CLOSES IN...
THAT PANEL ALMOST SHUT ME OUT, BUT I'M STILL WITH HER!

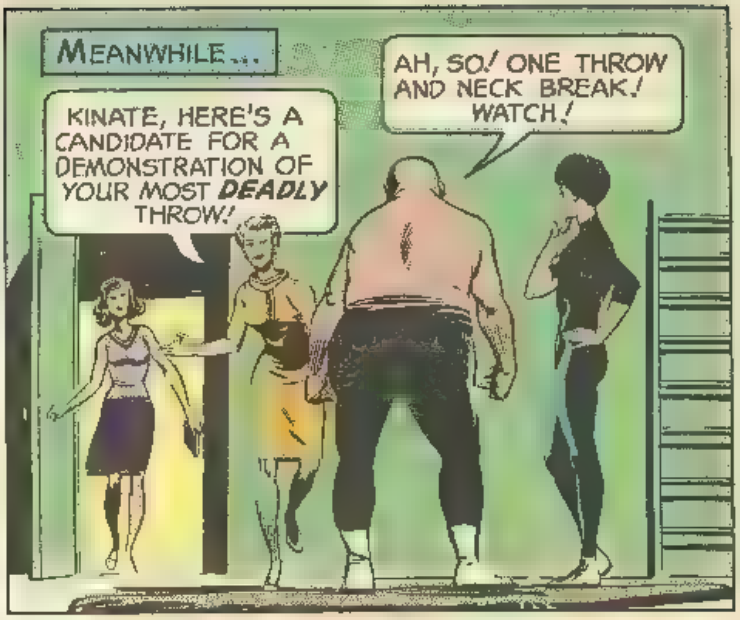

MEANWHILE, ONE FLOOR ABOVE AT THE AGENCY'S MAIN RECEPTION ROOM...
I'D LIKE TO SEE MISS LOVELY!
JUST A MOMENT, SIR!

PUSH THE ELEVATOR BUTTON AND STEP FORWARD! ONE FLOOR DOWN!
S-STEP FOR WARD-- ONE FLOOR-- DOWN -

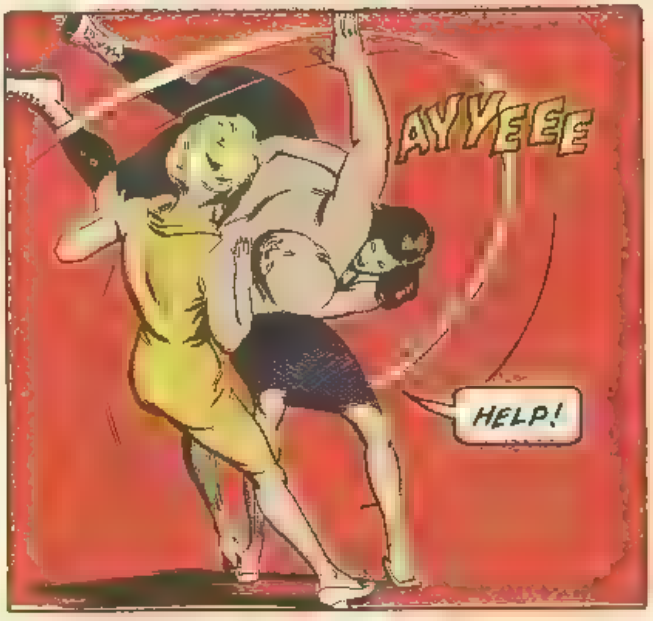

MARK SLATE PUSHES THE BUTTON! THE ELEVATOR DOORS SLIDE APART AND HE STEPS FORWARD...

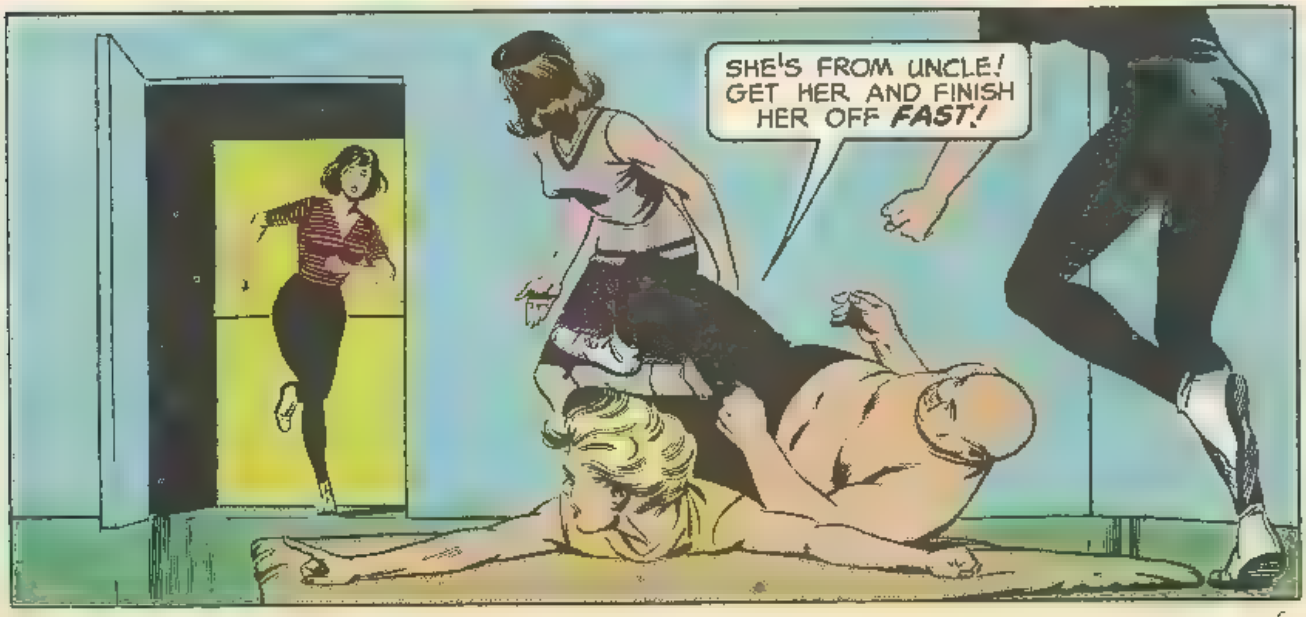
THERE! THIS WILL BREAK MY FALL... NOW TO OPEN THE DOOR BELOW AND PRAY I'M STILL IN TIME TO BACK UP APRIL -

GOOD... THE DOORS ARE BEGINNING TO PART--

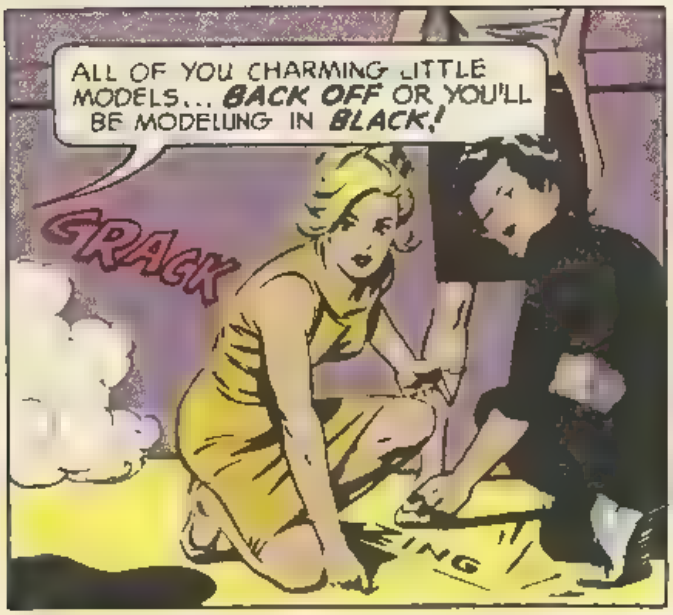

MEANWHILE...
KINATE, HERE'S A CANDIDATE FOR A DEMONSTRATION OF YOUR MOST DEADLY THROW!
AH, SO! ONE THROW AND NECK BREAK! WATCH!

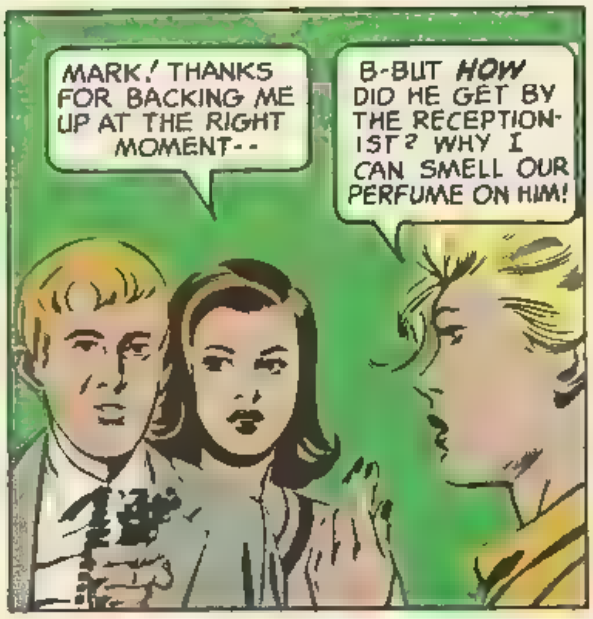
RIGHT HAND PLACED HERE! LEFT GO OVER HERE AND THEN...

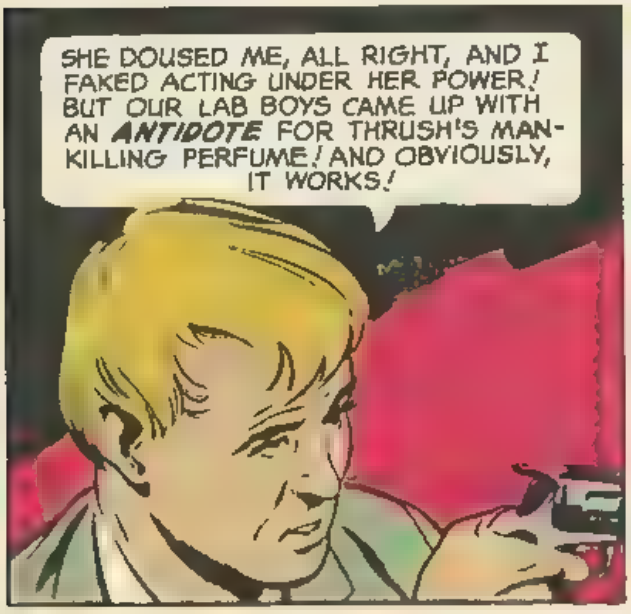

AYYEEE
HELP!

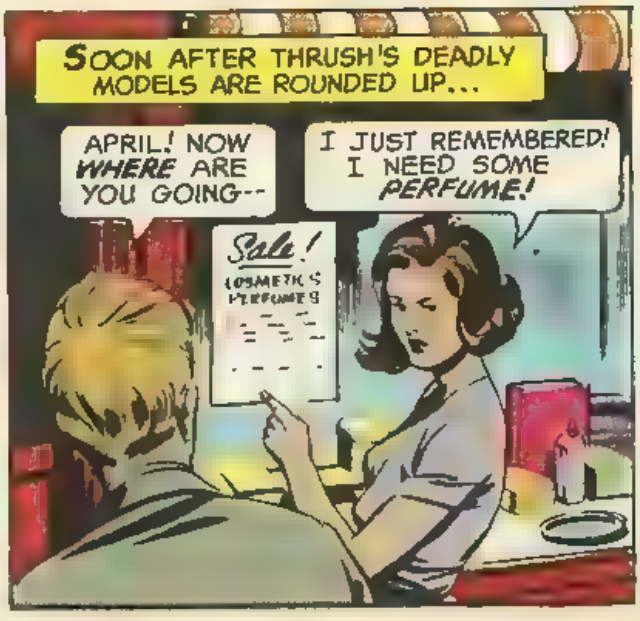

SHE'S FROM UNCLE! GET HER AND FINISH HER OFF FAST!

I HAVE HER--
OWW!


ALL OF YOU CHARMING LITTLE MODELS... BACK OFF OR YOU'LL BE MODELING IN BLACK!
CRACK
ING


MARK! THANKS FOR BACKING ME UP AT THE RIGHT MOMENT--
B-BUT HOW DID HE GET BY THE RECEPTIONIST? WHY I CAN SMELL OUR PERFUME ON HIM!


SHE DOUSED ME, ALL RIGHT, AND I FAKED ACTING UNDER HER POWER! BUT OUR LAB BOYS CAME UP WITH AN ANTIDOTE FOR THRUSH'S MAN-KILLING PERFUME! AND OBVIOUSLY, IT WORKS!


SOON AFTER THRUSH'S DEADLY MODELS ARE ROUNDED UP...
APRIL! NOW WHERE ARE YOU GOING--
I JUST REMEMBERED! I NEED SOME PERFUME!
Sale!
COSMETICS PERFUMES

APRIL IN THE FOG

THE fog had clamped down since UNCLE agent April Dancer had arrived at London Airport thirty minutes earlier. Now, somewhere in the West End, her cab was picking its way slowly to the heart of Soho, that cosmopolitan hub of London night life. It was approaching 2 a.m. and the streets looked drab and forbidding as they poked through the hanging mist.

April's right hand found the secret pocket in her fashionably tailored trousers. She pulled out her pencil-type radio link unit, adjusted the top and spoke. "Open channel D, please."

"Yes, Miss Dancer. What is it?" UNCLE chief Mr. Waverly, in the main control room of UNCLE headquarters in America, was glad to hear from his top girl agent.

"Instructions carried out so far, sir. No problems. What's the next move?"

Waverly's voice came back immediately: "Good. Make your way to the basement of Teddy's Tavern, a night club in Chaucer Street. Sit at the table in the far left corner of the room and wait. Your contact will introduce himself to you. That's all Miss Dancer."

April was about to say "Can't you tell me more about it, sir?" But Waverly, in typical style, had signed himself off immediately. She looked quizzically at the top of the radio unit, raised her pretty eyebrows, shrugged her shoulders and resigned herself to Mr. Waverly's peculiar attitude. He was well known for giving his agents the information he thought necessary . . . and no more.

April leaned forward. "Take me to Teddy's Tavern, driver," she instructed.

The never-ending combat between the two international organisations, UNCLE and THRUSH had been fiercely contested in London during recent weeks. UNCLE had the tip-off that THRUSH were perfecting a new audio device based on a high-pitched modulation. On an individual basis this sort of thing was not

For April Days

Snug and flattering, this necktie is April's choice for April days. Wear it over a suit, a tailored dress or a trouser suit.

The tension for this necktie is 4½ stitches to one inch.

Materials

2 oz. Sirdar Caprine (Mohair and Wool)
1 Pair No. 6 knitting needles
1 spare No. 6 knitting needle

Measurements

Length from point to point 27 inches.
Width 7 inches.

Abbreviations

K knit; p purl; sts stitches; tog together; sl slip one stitch knitways; wlfwd wool forward.

The Necktie

Cast on 2 sts.
1st Row. Increase once in the first st, increase once in the next st.
2nd Row. Sl, k3.
3rd Row. Sl, wlfwd, knit to the last st, wlfwd, k1.
4th Row. Sl, knit to end of row.
Repeat the 3rd and 4th rows 10 times. (26 sts).

**

Next Row. Sl, * using the spare needle slip the next st purlways, let the needle fall to the back of the work, k1, repeat from * to the last st, slip this st purlways onto the spare needle.
Leave the 13 sts on the spare needle and proceed on the remaining 13 sts :—
1st Row. Sl, * p1, k1, repeat from * to end of row.
2nd Row. Sl, k1, * p1, k1, repeat from * to the last st, k1.
Repeat the 1st and 2nd rows 4 times then the 1st row once.
Break off the wool and leave these 13 sts on a safety pin.
With the wrong side of the work facing, rejoin the wool to the 13 sts left on a spare needle and proceed as follows :
1st Row. K2, * p1, k1, repeat from * to the last st, k1.
2nd Row. Sl, * p1, k1, repeat from * to end of row.
3rd Row. Sl, k1, * p1, k1, repeat from * to the last st, k1.
Repeat the 2nd and 3rd rows 4 times.
Slip the 13 sts from the safety pin onto the spare needle and proceed as follows :
Next Row. Sl, * k1 from the spare needle, k1, repeat from * to the last st, k1 from the spare needle (26 sts). **

Proceed as follows :
1st Row. Sl, knit to end of row.
Repeat the 1st row twice.
Continue in garter st increasing once at each end of the next and every alternate row until there are 32 sts on the needle.
Continue in garter st without shaping until the work measures 19½ in. from the commencement of the point, ending on the wrong side of the work.
Continue in garter st decreasing once at each end of the next and every alternate row until 26 sts remain.
Next Row. Sl, knit to end of row.
Repeat from ** to ** once.
Proceed as follows :
1st Row. Sl, k2 tog, knit to the last 3 sts, k2 tog, k1.
2nd Row. Sl, wlfwd, k2 tog, knit to the last 3 sts, k2 tog, wlfwd, k1.
Repeat the 1st and 2nd rows 9 times. (6 sts).
Next Row. Sl, (k2 tog) twice, k1.
Next Row. Sl, k3.
Next Row. Sl, k3.
Next Row. (κ2 tog) twice.
Cast off.
Press carefully on the wrong side under a damp cloth with a hot iron.

new, but THRUSH had had their experts working on it for months and were on the verge of perfecting it on a "blanket coverage" scale.

As UNCLE agent Mark Slate had said to April: "With this new invention they will be able to control and dominate entire cities by the mere flick of a switch."

The ramifications of such a device were easy to visualise and, with such power in the crooked hands of THRUSH, the law-abiding organisation of UNCLE would be rendered virtually useless.

"The idea is the brain-child of Professor Mennon," Mr. Waverly had explained to Mark Slate while he set a film projector in motion. "There he is, Mr. Slate." Waverly pointed out the professor as the film was projected on to the screen.

Mark saw a thin-faced man, tall and angular, with a full beard and a slim moustache.

Waverly went on: "He is obviously being compelled to work for THRUSH, for until recently he was a well-respected V.I.P. with one of the Eastern countries. He'd even done a lot of useful work for UNCLE. But now there can be no doubt about it: he *is* working for THRUSH and working for them in London. And that's where you're going, Mr. Slate."

Waverly flicked a switch and spoke with Transportation. "I want Mr. Slate's papers ready for London in five minutes," he instructed. And in

two hours Mark Slate had reported on his way.

But that was almost two weeks ago. For about ten days, all had seemed to go well and reports had come through that Mark was on to something. But then . . . silence. So Waverly had dispatched April Dancer hotfoot to London

Her mission was two-fold: to find Mark Slate and then, either alone or with his help, to collect Professor Mennon and bring him back home.

The events had been going through April's pretty head as the cab edged its way through the fog.

" 'Ere-y-ar Miss; Teddy's Tavern," called the cockney cab driver, halting April's day dream. She paid him off, walked down a dozen steps, and into the dimly lighted atmosphere of the night club. Most of the customers had gone, but a few tables were occupied.

April saw the table in the far left corner of the room. It was unoccupied. She went over to it, sat down, and waited.

There was little delay. Within five minutes she was conscious of a man standing behind her. She turned. He was a thin-faced man, tall and angular, with a full beard and a slim moustache. Her eyes widened in astonishment: "But . . . you're. . . ."

"That's right, Miss Dancer. I'm Professor Mennon. We've been expecting you." Four burly gents had appeared, as if from nowhere, at the Professor's side. "Gosh, am I in trouble," thought April. "Mr. Waverly's instructions were way off beam, this time. Somehow I've landed myself fair and square in a trap."

Then she rolled her beautiful eyes round the arc of men, shrugged her pretty shoulders, and resigned herself to being escorted away. "We'll live to fight another day," she murmured as the party left the Tavern and disappeared into a waiting car which was soon swallowed up by the swirling fog.

April looked around the bare room. It looked impregnable. The door was solidly locked. She was capable of blowing it open with dynamite, but THRUSH agents were certain to be on guard outside the door. She walked over to the small window. Below, a couple of beefy forms were just visible through the fog, propped up against a street lamp.

Not knowing quite what her next move should be, she postponed a decision and instead took out her short-wave pencil radio, and called up Waverly.

"The situation's not good, sir," she reported. Then she described her predicament. "I seem to have walked straight into a trap."

"Well, Miss Dancer, no doubt you'll find a way out. Let me know when you've decided on your next move." Mr. Waverly offered little consolation to the UNCLE girl.

But she'd lived with, and thrived on, tough situations like this during UNCLE's running battles with THRUSH. To April they were all part of the game: provided they didn't get *too* rough!

There was a movement at the door and a slip of white paper appeared. April grabbed it quickly and read the note inside: *Escape window ten minutes. Meet me Teddy's Tavern one hour -Mennon.*

Seemed genuine enough. What else could it be? THRUSH already had her in their power. She must risk it anyway.

It was a long ten minutes. With a few seconds to go she walked over to the window. The street looked deserted. It was dead on time. April, working with swiftness and great expertise, produced a small tool from the lining of her jacket pocket. She worked on the window lock In a couple of seconds she heard a slight click, gave the beginnings of a smile of satisfaction, and opened the window.

She hauled herself on to the ledge outside. Four storeys up is high enough when you have to clamber down by the drain pipe . . . so April didn't look down a second time. Instead she kept close to the pipe, and gradually lowered herself. With ten feet to go she gratefully pushed herself away from the pipe and jumped to the ground

She got to her feet, spun round . . . and was face to face with a beefy six footer who had THRUSH stamped all over his square shoulders and arrogant stance. He had a pistol at the ready in his hand

"Come on, miss: back inside the building," he said with a sneery smile

April shrugged her shoulders. "Guess so," she replied and made to take a step forward. As she did so she collapsed "Oh . . . I think I've sprained my ankle climbing down that darned pipe," she said. "Do you mind if I just hold on to you for support? I think it'll be okay then."

"Okay, but watch it, lady."

April went to slip her arm round the THRUSH agent's waist, then it was as though she was jet propelled. Her right hand caught the agent's right wrist in exactly the correct spot. Agonising pain shot right up his arm, his face grimaced, and the firearm clattered to the ground Before he could recover, April took what looked like a small spray deodorant from her jacket pocket and gave it a small squeeze in the agent's face. He slumped to the ground "Sorry if you don't go for the perfume," muttered April to herself . . . then fled as a couple of THRUSH men rounded the corner and began to give chase.

The fog had practically cleared and day was breaking as April ran down a narrow alley and into a main road. *T-tu-t-t-n-g-g-g* . . . April looked over her shoulder as the bullet hit the pavement not six inches behind her and echoed round the alleyway. *P-t-t-n-g-g-g* . . . that one was even closer

April looked left and then right in desperation. Then a taxi came round a corner and into the deserted street The Girl from UNCLE disappeared inside and the taxi was on its way.

The burly THRUSH agents reached the main street a few seconds later, brandishing their guns. The street was deserted, except for a milk float on the opposite side of the road. They began to give chase on foot, frustrated by their immobility. Then a second taxi came round the corner. The THRUSH men hailed it, jumped aboard before it had stopped, and were in hot pursuit of UNCLE's top girl agent.

Or so they thought. Within a couple of seconds the street had regained its daybreak tranquility. But an early morning riser, looking out of his bedroom window, might have seen a strange sight. For, as the sound of the THRUSH taxi faded into silence, a young girl in a white trouser suit and jaunty matching cap, emerged from behind the milk float, dusted down her trousers, and strode off in the direction of Teddy's Tavern.

Her name might be April, but this Girl from UNCLE was no fool.

"They are forcing me to work for them " Professor Mennon spoke with great emotion, and was obviously on the verge of a total mental breakdown He had been subjected to intense mental strain in recent weeks while in the hands of THRUSH and he now saw in the arrival of April Dancer his one big hope of escape.

April eyed him keenly across the table. Teddy's Tavern was now deserted, the tables had their chairs stacked on them, except for the table in the far left corner of the room, where the two of them sat.

"From the start I pretended compliance, so that they do not think that I am anything but sympathetic to their aims. That is how I was able to slip you that note and indicate the watch change in the street outside your room," explained the Professor. "But what they are doing is evil. When they have the secret audio howl they will systematically dominate the world . . . city by city Only *I* am capable, of all people in the entire world, of giving them the essential data which will complete the information they need to carry out their threat of world domination "

"We've got to get you back home, Professor. That's for sure. But how? First of all I guess we'd better get out of this place."

April led the way. As they made for the bottom of the stairs which led from the Tavern and up to street level, April asked Mennon about something which had her puzzled. "Where have they got Mark Slate?"

"Mark Slate? Who is this Mark Slate? I don't know anyone of that name Should I?"

"He came to collect *you* a couple of weeks back, but after reporting that everything was going okay . . . silence. That's why I came—to pick up Mark, then you, and then get back home just as quickly as possible."

There was no time for further reasoning or speculation. As they reached daylight once more, it was clear that they had left the club not a moment too soon. As they raced away down the street, a pack of THRUSH agents, guns in their hands, raced after them

April could see that the Professor was no athlete. As they rounded a corner, she halted the Professor and, as they stopped, she took something from an inside pocket. It was a small disc, with a lid which levered off. She adjusted something inside, closed the lid, and took a quick look round the corner. THRUSH were no more than thirty yards away when she threw the disc. It was a perfectly timed throw. The disc landed just in front of the first crook and immediately there was a minor explosion The whole area was covered in thick white smoke and

THRUSH's men clutched desperately at their throats.

"That should give us at least ten minutes start," commented April coolly. She held the Professor's arm as he made to run off again. "Hold on, Professor." April took out her radio and called up Mr. Waverly. "I'm with the Professor, sir, and we're reasonably free of THRUSH. But I can't find any trace of Mark."

"Hmm . . ." came back Waverly. "I've been expecting to hear from you, Miss Dancer. What happened?"

"It's rather a long story, sir, and we really haven't a great deal of time, right now," said April. "What's the next move, sir?"

APRIL MAGIC

Chocolate-speckled ice-cream on a crunchy base drenched with caramel sauce: just the sweetest treat for April after an encounter with Thrush. M-m-m-melts in your mouth!

FROSTY CARNIVAL TORTE

Crispy Base

2 ozs. butter
4 ozs. golden syrup
2 ozs. brown sugar
4 ozs. marshmallows
3 ozs. Rice Krispies

Filling

One block chocolate carnival ice-cream.

Grease a 7-in. flan ring and place on a greased tray. Combine butter, syrup and sugar and bring to the boil. Boil for 1 minute, then remove from heat, add marshmallows and stir till melted. Cool slightly. Stir in Rice Krispies. Press mixture into flan ring and leave in a cool place till set. Remove ring, and place on serving dish. Mount scoops of chocolate carnival ice-cream on to the base and drizzle over caramalow sauce. Serve at once.

Caramallow Sauce

2 tablespoons golden syrup
1 oz. sugar
½ oz. butter
¼ pint water
3 level teaspoons arrowroot
4 ozs. marshmallows

Bring sugar, butter and syrup to the boil and boil gently til golden-brown. Remove pan from heat and slowly stir in the water, blended with arrowroot. Beat well, return to heat, and cool, stirring continuously until mixture thickens. Remove from heat and add marshmallows, stirring until they are melted. Serve warm.

"You and the Professor must go directly to the junction of Cross Street and Cavendish Road. It's about half a mile due north from where you are now standing. You will see a car waiting there. Get into that car. That's all, Miss Dancer."

"But, sir . . . but what about Mark . . . ?"

"I repeat, Miss Dancer; that is all."

April knew better than to argue with Mr. Waverly. Besides the seconds were ticking by. A quick glance round the corner and the Girl from UNCLE saw that the THRUSH squad were still sprawled helpless across the pavement, overcome by the heavy fumes from April's miniature knock-out bomb.

"Come on, Professor, let's go."

They could see the car, not a hundred yards away, and they lengthened their strides. April flung open the door and they clumbed into the back. "Okay, driver . . . let's go!"

But nothing happened.

April looked at the Professor, and then again at the driver. She leaned forward. She spoke a little louder: "Let's move, driver."

Still no response.

April went farther forward, touched him on the shoulder. He slowly keeled over into the passenger seat.

"He's dead," confirmed April.

THRUSH decided their next move. As April opened the door and made to climb out of the back and into the driver's seat, shots rang out. Hastily she shut the door again. April took out her own pistol and took a couple of pot shots in the direction of the assailants. The Professor, unarmed, was powerless to help. Shots continued to rain on the car, hitting the bodywork Most of them were coming from behind, but now THRUSH's men were encircling the car. One shot pierced the windscreen and lodged in the upholstery beside the Professor. By this time April had climbed over the front seat. Her hands grasped the steering wheel. She switched on the ignition and started the car.

Or rather . . . that was the inten-

(Continued on page 74)

PRETTY LONG!

Long hair is young . . . It's fun, fashionable, and flattering to most girls But long hair can look untidy and straggly unless it is given extra special attention.

We asked pretty pop singer, Carol Friday, how she copes with her lovely long dark hair so that it looks just right for every occasion in her busy life. Carol was only too willing to pass on her tips for keeping long hair pretty, showing us four of her favourite styles.

The first style shows Carol wearing her hair loose, arranged in little-girl ringlets and coyly caught back from the face at one side with a large daisy flower; a young, vivacious style admired by many of her friends.

When she comes up to town for a recording session she favours the cool, tidy, up-dated version of 'earphones' Hair is parted in the centre and wound into two plaits which are coiled round to cover the ears and secured with grips.

If Carol is wining and dining in town or going to the theatre, then she adopts a more sophisticated mood and wears her hair swept high on her head. Her hair is drawn up into a 'pony tail' on top and divided into sections which she arranges into big, loose curls.

tion. But the car wouldn't fire. No gas. One of those early bullets must have pierced the tank and drained it, she realised

A little too exposed at the front for comfort, April climbed back over the front seat. Then she was conscious of something else happening.

A London cab had pulled up alongside and the cockney driver seemed to be on April's side. "Common, missy; quick now."

April didn't stop to argue. She pushed the Professor out of the car and into the taxi, and quickly followed. Almost before she was in, and before the door got closed, the taxi was racing down the street, disregarding speed limits.

"A close call, missy," said the driver, once the immediate emergency was over. "Fancy a nice girl like you getting into a situation like that."

April was about to try to explain and to thank the cabbie for his help when she paused. That cockney accent . . . there was something slightly familiar about it. But how could there be. April knew no cockneys . . . and then it dawned.

"Mark Slate. What do you think you're doing?"

Slate turned his head and gave a disarming smile. "Hello, April. Well, to begin with, I've just rescued you from a pretty tough spot and——"

April cut in: "But . . . what . . . how . . . ?" Then she contented herself by saying: "You've got some explaining to do, my boy."

Mark Slate handled that old London cab like a grand prix racing driver, and they made the disused airfield on the outskirts of the capital in quick time and without incident.

As they climbed out, the airplane was already waiting for them. The door opened and the two UNCLE agents, their precious cargo between them, climbed aboard. The engines roared into life, the plane taxied up the runway and they were airborn. In a few hours they were safely inside UNCLE headquarters.

Said Mr. Waverly: "I think perhaps we should explain. Do you agree, Slate?" Mark smiled his agreement. "Well, Miss Dancer, you see Mr. Slate didn't go to London ahead of you. We just said he did. We didn't know the whereabouts of Professor Mennon and we needed to bring THRUSH out into the open. So we let THRUSH pick up our instructions sending you to London and deliberately let him listen in to our conversation while you were there."

"Nice for THRUSH," cooed April

Mr Waverly ignored her interjection. "We kept Mr. Slate back until you had gone, but he was right behind you. He was even on the same plane as you."

"Then why didn't you show up earlier?" queried April, turning to Mark. "I certainly could have used some help."

"Mr. Slate had strict instructions not to show his hand unless you were in really desperate trouble," answered Mr. Waverly.

"What took you so long at the end, Mark?" asked April. "Marooned in that car, the Professor and me, we could have done with your help a few minutes earlier."

"Well, April, you know how it is. I had things to attend to."

"Like what, Mark?"

"Well, like blowing up Teddy's Tavern, for a start. THRUSH used it as a front for a lot of their activities. And all the records concerning the Professor's work were hidden there. That's why it had to be blown sky high. That's what delayed me."

April knew when she was beaten "Okay, Mark, you win. But next time you want me and you call . . . see what happens."

Mark smiled. "I want you now," he said. "Join me for lunch . . . ?"

In her very busy life, Carol occasionally manages a free evening at home, relaxing with her friends and listening to other people's records. Then she wears this casual hairstyle, tied with a chiffon bow into a long side switch.

Carol says that the important thing with long hair is that it must be kept clean and shining by frequent shampooing.

Long hair is prone to splitting at the ends and Carol makes a point of having the ends trimmed regularly—just a fraction of an inch every month or so to remove those brittle hair tips which might otherwise split right up the hair shaft and break off. This is good advice too, for those who are trying to grow their hair. Regular use of a conditioner keeps hair glossy. Some girls find long hair gets greasy near the scalp but is dry at the ends, and for them Carol advises that they use a conditioner just on the hair tips. Poly Hair Conditioner is particularly good as it has a deep action—it doesn't just add surface shine.

How about brushing? Yes, says Carol, but gently does it -and use only a good quality, natural bristle brush.

All Carol's hairstyles are set in one basic style using bobble-ended rollers, which are best for very long hair. This style gives bounce and curl to the ends so that Carol can dress her hair in the various ways described.

The case of the T.V. take-over

TALL, handsome John Murray, television announcer with station XB5 in New York City, pushed the swivel chair back from his desk, eased his tie from his collar, and relaxed. "Another stint over," he called to the cameraman standing a few feet away. "Can't say I'm sorry I'm tired today."

"What is it now, John? An evening out on the town?" called back the cameraman.

"Not on your life, boy. For me, now, it's back home and an early night in bed."

Murray stretched his long frame to ease the tensions, and strode out of the studio. Lucky for him that he made a quick departure from the studio. For he hadn't walked twenty yards down the corridor, on his way to the main elevator, when there was a loud explosion. John turned to see the swing-door windows, leading to the studio, clouded with smoke.

He hurried back. The chair he had been sitting on, the table he had been sitting at, were a heap of rubble. The place was in chaos. Floodlights were wrecked and strewn over the floor, wires and leads to electrical supplies were tangled and twisted; television cameras were ruined . . . and the cameraman John Murray had been talking to not a couple of minutes earlier was slumped on the floor. He was dead

April Dancer, the Girl from UNCLE, had been entering the main lobby of station XB5 when the explosion had occurred It was loud enough for her to hear, in spite of the station's excellent sound-proofing, and she quickened her pace as she made for the main elevator

She had an assignment which concerned John Murray, but she couldn't help wondering, as she heard the bang, whether someone had not got there before her

After three assignments for UNCLE which had taken her to distant corners of the globe, a mission in the very heart of New York City was a welcome departure. As she had said to Mark Slate, her harried helper: "Mught even get time on this job to have a hairdo . . . and my nails polished."

But hairdos and polished nails were forgotten as April swept swiftly to the fifteenth floor in the elevator. The doors slid open and she stepped out. Quickly she moved along the polished corridors to John Murray's studio. The announcer was standing over the body of the dead cameraman as April walked in. He looked dazed and shaken

April peered at the slumped figure on the floor and then looked expertly round the room She moved to the shattered remains of Murray's chair and table. Her gaze and fingers searched swiftly and then, on the splintered remains of the chair seat, she felt a small round pad. Immediately she knew how the explosion had occurred.

The announcer's room had been bugged. The round pad indicated a self-detonating device. It must have been automatically set to go off in a specified number of seconds following Murray's closing announcement. Normally the announcer hung around the studio a while after his stint, relaxing, chatting with the technicians and generally unwinding after his thirty-minute show which was networked far and wide and which had shot up to the top of the popularity charts. On this occasion John Murray had been tired . . . and it looked as though his fatigue had saved his life.

April turned to the debonair announcer "I've got a cab waiting downstairs. I'll take you home." She took hold of his arm and eased him out of the room. He followed like a dazed, overgrown schoolboy.

A few hours later, in UNCLE's New York headquarters, John Murray was being entrusted with some of the confidential information which had sent April Dancer hot-foot to station XB5.

UNCLE boss Alexander Waverly explained. "There seems little doubt, Mr. Murray, that THRUSH are attempting to take over your television station. Although we don't know for certain, it seems reasonable to assume that they want it as a means of mass communication among their agents. Your station is picked up over a very wide area and has a strong signal As a means of co-ordinating activity, it would be a decided asset."

John Murray, his nerves now steadied after his gruelling experience, sat and listened intently. By his side were April Dancer and Mark Slate two of UNCLE's top agents

Continued Waverly: "If THRUSH are determined, as I am sure they are, then an isolated explosion like this is not the end of things. It is against their own interests to damage the station in a widespread way, so they will employ other tactics.

"You must go back, Mr Murray, and carry on exactly as if nothing had happened. Your programmes must continue. You will be in a dangerous position, but Miss Dancer and Mr Slate will never be far from you and they will give you protection. But when THRUSH next strike we must be ready for them, and you, Mr. Murray, more than anyone, can help us to expose them."

The announcer looked undecided. Finally, he agreed. "All right," he said. "If you think that's best, I'll do it."

For the next couple of weeks April Dancer played the role of continuity girl at station XB5, while Mark Slate donned overalls and became a general duties studio electrician THRUSH made no discernible move and the Girl from UNCLE and her colleague began to think they were wasting their time.

But Waverly wouldn't withdraw them from duty. "There *is* something happening," he said. "Just you stay on duty."

Waverly was right. Something was happening and it became apparent to April one afternoon when a new script girl assistant turned up for duty

"I'm filling in temporarily," the girl announced "Sheila, the regular script assistant, was taken ill."

"Funny thing, Mark," said April when the two were having their regular secret meeting in one of the basement filing rooms at the station. "Come to think of it, there's been a heap of changes lately. New faces seem to be popping up all over."

"In television, people are always switching around," countered Mark. "But maybe you have something. I've noticed a number of newcomers myself."

But in a situation like this the UNCLE agents could do nothing. They had to wait until THRUSH made their first move; then they must be ready to counter with the speed of lightning

In the midst of it all, John Murray got on with his job somewhat nervously, though his cheerful manner and strong personality on the screen gave no inking of the drama that was surely developing at station XB5.

It was all a tedious war of nerves. April and Mark now knew for certain that THRUSH were infiltrating agents into the station, though they could do little about it. And on the other hand, THRUSH must know of April and Mark's existence as UNCLE agents assigned to the station

April and Mark were having to be minutely careful in everything they did. They ate out, didn't take coffee or tea from the station canteen in case drugs had been added, trusted no one and never acted on messages given them without first checking and double checking.

After another week the tension was beginning to be felt even by top agents like April and Mark. But, resolutely, they carried out their mission.

Then, quietly but systematically, THRUSH made their move.

April, on continuity duty in the studio one evening, had a call on the intercom

"Meet me when you come off duty in half an hour, April," Mark's voice requested "I think I've stumbled on something."

"Good old Mark," thought April. "Trust him to get on to something first."

They'd agreed on the old basement filing room for their secret meeting and April, half an hour later, hurried down excitedly, keen to hear Mark's news. Everything was in darkness as she quietly turned the lock of the door with her skeleton key and stepped inside. It was a

large area, filled with tall filing cabinets, reference books and copies of films used by the station.

"Mark! Mark . . . !" called April, quietly.

There was no response.

April frowned and walked even more cautiously. She made her way stealthily to the left, to the point where they normally met. But now she held her small gun firmly in her right hand, the thin yet piercing beam of her mini-torch spiking the darkness in front of her left hand.

As she advanced slowly she swung the torch beam from left to right in an attempt to pick up anything suspicious.

"Mark!" she whispered. "Mark . . . where are you?"

No sound came from the dark expanse ahead of her. By now she realised that she had walked into a trap. Mark had sent no message . . . yet that telephone message? It sounded like Mark. She felt certain it *had* been Mark.

She had no chance for further speculation. With a snap the room was suddenly flooded in light. As she saw the self-satisfied smiles on the faces of at least a dozen THRUSH agents, posted close to the filing cabinets to form a complete circle around her, a gun was thrust into her lower back and a female voice called: "Okay, April. Drop it." It was a familiar voice . . . the voice of the new script assistant.

For a second April's eyes blazed and she was tempted to make a fight of it. But the Girl from UNCLE had been taught how to win battles with discretion and intelligence, as well as with courage and audacity. She lowered her gun to the floor and, for the moment, called it a day.

Mark was worried. For five hours there had been no word from April and all he could do was to wait through the night and hope that in the morning there would be some news of the Girl from UNCLE.

But morning arrived and the staff of station XB5 reported for another day's work. There was still no sign of April. Finally Mark tackled John Murray about it.

"I'm trying to find Miss Dancer. Can you tell me where she is today?"

"Haven't you heard?" came back Murray. "There was a message this morning to say that Miss Dancer won't be in. She's had to leave town urgently and isn't expected back for some time. I'm having to get a replacement quickly."

Mark was puzzled and more than a little worried, but he tried to conceal his surprise. He sauntered out of the room and up the corridor. He stepped into a small laundry closet, closed the door behind him and picked out from his overall pocket his radio contact unit.

"Open channel D, please."

"Yes, Mr. Slate. What is it?"

"It's Miss Dancer, sir. She's disappeared."

There was a momentary pause. Then Mr. Waverly replied: "This looks like it, Mr. Slate. THRUSH seem set to make their move. Keep close to it."

Mark closed down his unit, put it back in his inside pocket and stepped out of the closet, back into the

FOR COOL CRIMES

At all times of the day and night and in all weathers April has to answer the call from U.N.C.L.E. And, as a blue nose is most unbecoming to a girl, April chooses this soft mohair scarf for warmth and fashion. You can knit one just like it. Choose a gay colour to dispel winter gloom.

The tension for this scarf is 3 patterns (6 stitches) to 2 inches.

Material

4 ozs. Sirdar Caprine (Mohair and Wool)
1 Pair No. 2 knitting needles
1 No. 8 crochet hook

Measurements

Length (excluding fringe): 48 inches.
Width: 12 inches.

Abbreviations

K knit; sl slip one stitch knitways; wlfwd wool forward.

Cast on 37 sts.

1st Row. Sl, k1, * wlfwd, k2 tog, repeat from * to the last st, k1.

Repeat the 1st row until the work measures 48 inches from the commencement, ending on the wrong side of the work.

Cast off loosely knitways.

To Complete

Press lightly on the wrong side under a damp cloth with a hot iron.

To Fringe

Work a fringe across the cast-off and cast-on edges of the scarf as follows: using the No. 8 crochet hook and with the wrong side of the work facing, * using 4 strands of wool 6 inches in length draw a loop through the edge of the scarf, draw the ends through the loop to form a fringe, repeat from * in every alternate st.

corridor. He'd taken five steps, maybe six, when he was conscious of someone behind him. He looked round. Yes, Mark could spot a THRUSH agent a mile off and the square-shouldered, shirt-sleeved "studio technician" was certainly a THRUSH agent

Mark looked ahead again, rounded a corner and saw coming towards him a couple more THRUSH men. So this was to be it. Mark stopped.

The THRUSH gang, from front and rear, advanced on him. The man from the rear moved first. As he sprang forward, Mark side-stepped neatly, brought his hand down hard on the side of the attacker's neck, and he crumpled in a heap in the corridor.

Before Mark could recover the other THRUSH agents were on him. Mark sagged with the weight of one of the THRUSH thugs, while the other kicked him heavily in the ribs. As the UNCLE agent gasped for breath a small capsule plopped in his face. Everything went misty and he felt himself sink steadily to the floor.

April Dancer, the with-it Girl from UNCLE, was furious with herself for walking into the THRUSH trap. She was held captive in a small ante-room not far from John Murray's studio, but was already working on her escape. She had detected that the lock was of the audible type and could only be sprung through a high-pitched modulation. But UNCLE were well stocked with the advanced tools of their dangerous trade and April had little trouble in finding the current pitch with the aid of the special device with which she, and other UNCLE agents, were now equipped.

Her main concern, as she eased back the door, was to contact John Murray and warn him of THRUSH's move. She crept out steadily and made her way cautiously to his studio. She could see him through the glass panelling as he finished his programme and as he came off the air she made her move.

The script assistant employed by THRUSH was in the studio and as April advanced through the swing doors she turned. Her hand dived into her skirt waistband, but even as she pulled out a revolver April's foot came up and kicked it out of her grasp. In a second, April was by her side, had got her own gun stuck menacingly in her ribs, and had her walking towards a somewhat startled John Murray.

"My turn this time, girlie," whispered April through clenched teeth. She pushed the script assistant over to John Murray. "Here, keep her covered, John, while I go in search of Mark."

But to April's utter astonishment Murray made no move. The script assistant smiled as two burly technicians came up from behind, overpowered April and disarmed her.

"John . . but, John. . . ." Such astounding truth took a while to be absorbed, but then realisation came to April. So John Murray was in league with THRUSH.

"Everything was going well until you and Slate came along," thundered a very different John Murray. "I had a fat offer from THRUSH for the use of this station and could carry on with my normal programmes. All they wanted was to re-script certain items so that they could put out information to their men. And for that facility I was to be well rewarded. Neither you, Miss Dancer, nor Slate, nor anyone else is going to spoil that for me."

It was clear now. The original explosion was a put-up job to take the heat off Murray. UNCLE must have suspected him from the start.

But this speculation was doing April no good. She was in a spot, and her one chance was to move speedily. She put out a hand, as if to steady herself on the back of a chair, giving the idea that John Murray's pronouncements about his alignment with THRUSH had been a terrible blow. Then, in five seconds, the studio was in turmoil. April plucked a small cachet from its concealed position inside the cuff of her jacket and threw it down in front of Murray. Clouds of thick, white smoke billowed

April, with everyone else frozen through sheer surprise and astonishment, quickly regained her gun from the THRUSH agent who was holding it. Before he could recover she had kicked him heavily in the shin and, as he bent down in agony, she sent him sprawling across the studio with a hefty push.

April was now by John Murray's side and had her gun trained on him. Pushing him ahead of her they moved towards the swing doors. There was a flash, a small explosion, and April's right sleeve split as the bullet grazed her arm. Her eyes flashed and she spat back with her own gun. There was a yelp of pain, a heavy thud as a body slumped to

the floor. No other THRUSH agent was prepared to make a move after that, and April and Murray moved out of the studio and into the corridor.

There was a couple of hundred yards walk to the main lift shaft and April hurried her captor along at a good pace. She thought it strange that no other THRUSH agents should challenge her, but her aim now was to get Murray back to UNCLE headquarters and she didn't consider her good fortune too deeply. She was just thankful for it.

Her finger pressed the elevator button and in a couple of seconds the door slid aside

"In you go my friend," urged April, thrusting her gun a little deeper into the small of John Murray's back. Then both of them faltered and April's mouth fell slightly open. Propped up in the corner of the elevator, just rousing himself into full consciousness, was . . . Mark Slate.

Keeping her gun well trained on Murray, April couldn't resist the banter. "Well now Don't tell me. Let me guess what you're doing here Could it be your girl friend kicked you out . . . ?"

Mark summoned a sickly smile and got to his feet. Not to be outbantered, even in this situation, he replied softly: "And who's this then? A new boy friend?"

There was no time for further exchanges, as sounds of running and scuffling were heard from down the corridor. April pressed the button inside the elevator and they began to descend.

The elevator stopped, the doors glided apart and April and Mark with John Murray their captor, stepped out. But the UNCLE agents hadn't gone a couple of yards into the lobby when they began to retreat again. A semicircle of THRUSH agents seemed to fill the foyer and were advancing steadily towards them, guns at the ready. With their backs to the wall, Mark and April kept John Murray as hostage. No words were exchanged. The THRUSH pack knew well enough that should they make one move, then they would risk the life of John Murray. But both Mark and April knew that this possibility wouldn't deter them for long

With her eyes still fixed on the THRUSH agents, April felt up the wall at the back and pressed the button to bring the elevator down again. But even as she did so pandemonium broke out. There was scuffling around the entrance doors and then the THRUSH agents turned their attentions away from Mark and April and began shooting in the opposite direction

"Seems like we've got reinforcements, Mark," stated April calmly.

"I think you're right, love," mused Mark

Within four minutes the fight was over. April and Mark, with John Murray, stepped through the debris of slumped and battered bodies and out into the street.

They were about to hail a cab when a voice called to them: "Over here, you two." It was Mr. Waverly himself, gesticulating from the back of a large limousine. "I expected you some fifteen minutes ago," he asserted. "What kept you?"

April looked at Mark.

Mark looked at April.

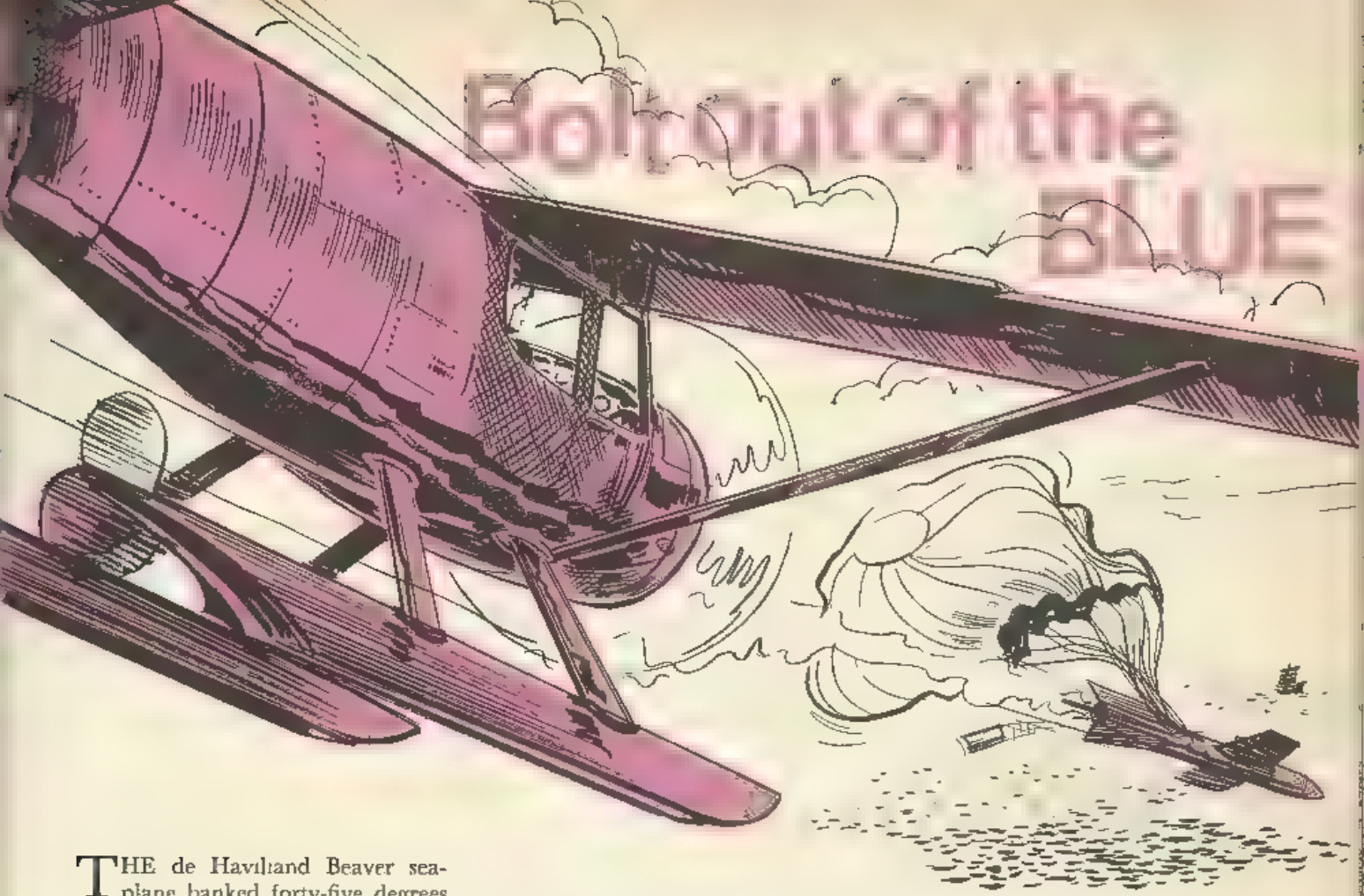
Neither spoke

Later, at UNCLE H.Q., Waverly explained. "THRUSH weren't the only infiltrators into Murray's television station. We'd been putting our own men in almost from the time THRUSH started their activities. Once we knew that they had made their move we felt it was time for our men to act too. We had our suspicions about John Murray from the time you brought him here. We knew THRUSH had approached him and we didn't consider him of sufficiently high calibre to resist a tempting financial offer"

"No one makes *me* an offer like that," countered April.

"Certainly, Miss Dancer, you'll never make money like that on UNCLE expenses."

Bolt out of the BLUE



THE de Havilland Beaver seaplane banked forty-five degrees to avoid a towering cumulus cloud mass. A minute later it resumed its original heading.

April Dancer turned back her flying glove, checked her chronometer and noted the alteration in the navigation log, strapped to the leg of her white flying overall. Her eyes scanned her instrument panel.

"Fuel okay; engine revs okay; oil pressures, temperatures, correct. All systems go, go, go," she said to herself light-heartedly.

She peered through the broken clouds to the blue South China Sea below. The fact that her engine was running smoothly did not relieve her anxiety, for those romantic blue waters were shark infested, and it was only the reliability of the seaplane and her skill as a pilot which could take her safely back to her base at Hong Kong. As an UNCLE agent, April had to keep in flying practice, and this flight was one of her routine training exercises.

April half closed her eyes to keep out the glare of the sun, as she looked across the panoramic skyscape. On her starboard side she noticed a short, white vapour trail which appeared to be heading her way. It was too small to be an aircraft of any size, so April assumed it was a single-engined jet fighter.

Of course, Communist China was fifteen miles to the north, according to her reckoning, but as she was flying over international waters—as she was perfectly entitled to do—she felt justified in maintaining her heading. Nevertheless, she kept an eye on the vapour trail, and her hand on her joystick ready to flick the aircraft into a cloud mass, should the need arise.

As the vapour trail sped south, it became obvious that it was not created by a manned aircraft but by a small rocket. April broke away from her flight plan, intercepted the missile and formated on it.

The missile flew straight and level, on its short, stubby wings. It was painted yellow all over, and carried no national or other identification markings of any sort. April could hear the noise of the rocket motor above the roar of her own radial engine. It rattled like a motor cycle single-cylinder engine, without its silencer.

"Pulse jet," said April to herself. That was the motor used in the first German flying bombs.

Suddenly the rocket motor stopped, and the missile flicked over into a controlled dive. Automatically April peeled off after it. Like a Battle of Britain Spitfire pilot, she bored in determinedly. Had her aircraft been fitted with machine-guns, she could have knocked the object out of the sky.

The rocket and pursuit plane were in a vertical dive when a hatch cover flew off the rocket casing, missing the aircraft by a hair's breadth. Automatically April throttled back and put out her air brakes. But she was too late. A white parachute canopy streamed out before her eyes. April

heaved back on her joystick. Her propeller cut into the canopy, tangled the shroud lines, and stopped. White nylon covered the cockpit canopy so completely that April was blind to the outside world. Her instruments told her she was in a shallow dive, and she had not the strength to raise the heavy nose.

But she did not panic. She switched on her transmitter to the distress frequency. The signals were transmitted automatically, leaving April free to deal with her emergency. She whipped the emergency axe from its storage and splintered the Perspex windscreen. Next she took her dagger, which was sheathed in a leg pocket of her flying suit, and nicked the nylon canopy. The slipstream did the rest. The canopy was ripped open and she could see again.

The sea was too close for comfort. Eventually she would have to ditch so she let the seaplane drop. Just before contact, she eased out of the dive. The aircraft had the speed to respond, then as it lost its speed, it smacked into the waves, jarring nearly every bone in her body. She was down in one piece

April eased her aching body through the upper escape hatch to remove the parachute which entangled her aircraft. By a stroke of good fortune, a Chinese junk lay about two miles away It appeared to be steering for her. But, just in case, April shot off a distress flare to attract their attention.

Whilst she waited for the junk, April used her time to cut free the canopy and shroud lines snaring her aircraft. These she dropped into the sea. Provided a typhoon did not spring up, she hoped she would be towed by the junk into a safe harbour. But no sooner had she cleared her propeller, than a rifle bullet whistled over her head.

April looked up from her engine cowling to see two Chinese marksmen on the forecastle of the junk. They were firing repeatedly. Bullets splattered the aircraft and the sea around her. Keeping her head down, she slipped back into her cockpit and started her motor.

Those Chinese were after her blood. She could not understand

their motive, but she had sufficient sense not to stay where she was a sitting target. She turned tail, taxied across the sea, and took off, with bullets thudding into her wings and float.

The howling slipstream from the propeller whipped her face through the broken windscreen. The aircraft flew sluggishly. She was unable to maintain a satisfactory cruising speed. The seaplane was very heavy on the port side because, as April could see through her hatch, the parachute rigging lines around her float still dragged the rocket and the ripped canopy. Fortunately the bullet holes which had torn the fabric from her fuselage had not damaged any of the aircraft's essential systems. Nevertheless, she realised that it was impossible for her to reach base, and sooner or later she would have to come down in a sea where the natives were as hostile as the sharks.

From a map, April noted that there was a small group of coral islands to the south-east within easy reach—in fact, she could just make them out on the distant horizon. As she flew nearer, she saw that they were apparently uninhabited; but she was committed to touch down She picked out a stretch of sheltered water in the lee of the first island, cut back her throttles and touched down three hundred yards from the beach

Owing to the bullet holes in her starboard float, the aircraft slowly heeled over as the float began to fill with water. April, immediately realising what was happening, opened the throttles again and raced for the beach.

It was a race against time. As the waterlogged float sank, it scraped the bottom of the shallow waters. The aircraft ground-looped so that the undamaged float swung on to the beach. April leapt down from her cockpit on to the golden sands. She was safe again, at least for the time being.

Of course, she realised there was more to this incident than met the eye. The unidentifiable rocket, launched from Communist China, was programmed to splash down into the sea twenty miles from the coast. The Chinese junk may have been in that area by chance, but as it had immediately shown signs of hostility it was very likely that it was waiting to retrieve the rocket after splash-down

But why? This was the sort of assignment UNCLE sent her to investigate. She was well trained to inquire into such incidents, yet on this

lonely desert island, without orders from UNCLE, she felt unusually exposed to the dangers and, if she heeded her female intuition, she knew this would be a dirty business

April dragged the half-submerged rocket on to the beach where she could examine it in detail. The complete canister was about six feet long though only nine inches in diameter. Using the aircraft emergency axe, she broke open the rocket casing. In front of the rocket motor was the compartment in which the parachute was stowed during flight. Next lay two fuel tanks, both now empty. In the payload bay were a score of sachets. April opened one and sniffed at the contents, but pulled her head back when she caught the sickly, sweet smell.

"Ugh! Opium," she said.

In all, there must have been ten or twelve pounds of the stuff, which would bring several thousands of pounds in the underworld markets of Hong Kong

April had been right in suspecting that this was a dirty business. Opium smuggling had developed into a highly organised crime in Hong Kong. It was believed to be ruthlessly organised by a Chinese lady named Madam Hone Kwai Wey, more often referred to in English as *The Evil One*. This female opium smuggler had no respect for humanity. She required little excuse to cut a man's throat and throw him into the Yellow Sea. Should April come into contact with The Evil One, she could expect no mercy.

April spun round, hearing a rustle of leaves in the desert island undergrowth. She felt near to screaming with fright. Before her stood Madam Hone Kwai Wey, dressed in a shimmering garment of black silk, elaborately patterned, like a Chinese screen. On either side of her stood two assassins, who pointed the muzzles of their rifles at April's head. Another Chinaman adjusted the loop aerial of a radio-location set which he carried in front of him in an open haversack.

"This is the rocket," he said excitedly.

April looked at the exposed radio equipment housed in the nose cone. Immediately she realised that the rocket had been issuing a radio signal which had been detected and tracked by her captors

"Give me the payload," shrieked Madam Hone Kwai Wey

The Chinaman buttoned up his haversack, knelt in the sand and gathered up the opium sachets.

"They are all here, Madam," he said.

"Good. Bring them to the junk, but first burn the rocket and this aircraft." The Evil One turned to April. "You will come to the junk. I want words with you."

April was pulled to her feet and pushed on her way.

"Do not hurt her yet," snarled The Evil One to her guards, "or I'll have you both lashed to the anchor chain and dragged along the bottom of the bay."

April sat on the end of a plank overhanging the bay. Beneath her feet, a thirty-foot shark cut through the clear water. April shuddered as the monster rolled over to reveal its greedy mouth. The wild fish collided with the junk at anchor, its rough skin grating the timbers like a rasp, and vibrating the plank beneath April so that she feared she would be thrown into the water.

The Evil One smiled as she sat on a comfortable chair on the deck and fanned her face

"I learnt this trick from English history," she said. "I thought you would be familiar with the ways of English pirates. Now tell me, what do you know about the rocket?"

"I know nothing," said April. "It

was sheer chance that I collided with it."

April looked beyond the headland to the smoke which curled up into the sky from her burning aircraft.

"How unfortunate for you," said The Evil One.

She nodded to one of her deck hands. He stepped on to the plank and, taking care to hold on to the ship's side with one hand, he slowly pushed out a lighted torch with his other hand. April, feeling the heat of the torch on her face, shuffled nearer to the edge of the plank. Another shark swam below her. As far as she could see, a whole school of the beasts, about thirty or forty, were basking in the vicinity of the anchored junk, attracted no doubt by the smell of some rubbish tipped over the side by the Chinese galley boy

The Evil One snapped her fan shut

"I am quickly losing my patience with you," she screamed. "Why were you flying in this area? Who knows of your flight? And why did you open up the rocket? Tell me, tell me!"

April looked again at the snub-nosed sharks which bored through the water with the speed of torpedoes and the manœuvrability of speed boats. Their mouths were large enough to devour her with one gulp, yet it seemed strange that their teeth were minute. Besides having snub noses, their dorsal fins were wide and open

"Do you have the insolence to refuse to answer me?"

April racked her brains to remember what she had been taught about sharks. She thought, although she could not be sure, that because of the absence of large teeth, these fish were not man-eating but basking sharks.

"I have now lost my patience with you," snapped The Evil One. "The sharks shall have you. But before they do, for your insolence, you shall sample Chinese hospitality. Ming, bring up the thumb-screws, and a gag to stop her screams. Hoe Kway, bring her back on deck."

April feared the Chinese more than she feared the sharks. As Hoe Kway advanced along the plank, she screamed and dropped into the water. She allowed herself to fall to the bottom then came up on the other side of the junk. She hung on to the timbers of the junk's side. So far she had not been observed; she assumed that Madam Hone Kwai Wey and her crew would be looking the other way.

April took a deep breath and swam away underwater. Occasionally she broke the surface to breathe, then she would dive and swim another forty yards beneath the surface. She felt confident that she could escape the eyes of the Chinese, for she was swimming out into the sun, as she had been taught

Unfortunately, this also took her out to sea. Even if she was right in assuming that the sharks she had identified were basking sharks, there could still be man-eaters in the area. She closed her eyes and hoped she would not feel the jaws of the beasts on her legs.

When she thought she was well clear of the junk, she turned towards the headland which jutted out from the island. In all, the complete swim would cover roughly a mile, and her hopes began to rise as she closed into the coast. When her legs brushed the sea-bed she sang out with relief. Never, she vowed, never again would she swim in shark-infested waters.

Her swim had taken her half an hour. In that time, the junk had hoisted anchor and set sail. Now it was no more than a speck on the horizon.

April saw another vessel at sea. Perhaps attracted by the smoke from the smouldering aircraft, it closed in to the island. April recognised it as a gunboat of the Royal Navy. She stood on the headland and waved. The sailors obviously spotted her white flying suit against the dark green tropical vegetation, for they sent a cutter inshore to pick her up.

"Welcome aboard H.M.S. *Hornet*," said an immaculate naval officer as he helped her aboard the British vessel. He wore the braids of a lieutenant-commander. "We picked up your aircraft distress signal, which faded out an hour ago. I'm pleased to see we weren't too late."

"So am I," said April "Incidentally, would you like to get your hands on Madam Hone Kwai Wey?"

"The Evil One? Who wouldn't, if she exists."

"You'll find her on that junk," said April, pointing to the speck on the horizon. "With her is £50,000 worth of smuggled opium."

"Really?" said the naval officer. "We'll see about that." He turned to his men. "Number One, intercept that Chinese fishing vessel. Load the gun. Stand by to put a shot across her bows." The officer turned back to April "Now, Ma'am, I'd like you to go below, if you please. I have work to do on deck. You may use my quarters to dry out. I'll have some dry towels and a spare set of clothes sent to you."

"Thank you, Captain. Best of luck with The Evil One."

April slipped a warm, white woollen sweater over her head.

"Crack!"

The recoil from the 4·5 gun shook the gunboat. April, peering through the porthole in the lieutenant-commander's quarters, saw the shell splash into the sea in front of the junk's bows. The gunboat closed in and a party of armed ratings boarded the Chinese vessel.

"So that's the end of the infamous Hone Kwai Wey," April said to herself.

The scourge of the Yellow Seas had at last been taken. She had been devilishly clever in amassing a fortune and building up her notorious reputation Her opium poppies had been grown in Communist China, and the drug extracted and launched by rocket. A Chinese fishing junk would leave Hong Kong, pick up the opium as well as a hold of fish—and return to harbour without arousing the suspicions of the Customs and Excise Officers

April had fallen into the clutches of Madam Hone Kwai Wey because the Chinese had homed on the rocket's signal. The Evil One had fallen into the hands of the Royal Navy because the gunboat had located the distress signals from the Beaver seaplane.

Such is life.

The Case of Madame X

APRIL DANCER, the Girl from UNCLE, nosed her nifty sports car away from the centre of Santa Monica and headed for the open country. The plan had been meticulously worked out and, the activities of the notorious THRUSH organisation apart, should not prove troublesome for April to carry through.

But April had encountered THRUSH on many occasions in the past and had a careful respect for their efficiency and ruthlessness. As Mr. Waverly had warned earlier: "Be careful, Miss Dancer. THRUSH badly need Madame X and will do everything in their power to get her."

Madame X was the code name given to a V.I.P. from Europe who was now required urgently in UNCLE's American headquarters. She had been carefully guarded by UNCLE's European organisation and had travelled secretly across the Atlantic, still under their protection. In a bid to out-manœuvre THRUSH she had been landed in South America and was now being passed through a human chain of UNCLE agents on her way up to New York.

April's duty was clear enough. She had to pick up Madame X from a secret rendezvous about ten miles out of Santa Monica, bring her back into town, and then wait with her in an hotel room for further instructions.

Not the most complicated of missions for the intrepid Girl from UNCLE, but April was well enough trained to treat each and every assignment with equal care, courage and caution. This particular duty might seem simple enough, but if THRUSH had already latched on to UNCLE's clever scheme, then the place could be crawling with their agents right now.

April was watchful for any eventuality. She stole a glance in her rear-view mirror, but it didn't look as if she was being followed. Her foot eased off the pedal and dabbed the brake as she swung off the main highway and on to a long, gently twisting secondary road.

The powerful sports car roared as April slipped the clutch and revved the engine before slotting the gear lever into third. She took the first curve smoothly and as the road straightened she increased speed and moved smoothly back into top. If all was well she would travel along this road for about five miles; there would be an isolated farmhouse on the left and inside that farmhouse Madame X would be waiting.

April's expert driving and the quick acceleration of the small yet powerful sports car enabled the Girl from UNCLE to cover the five miles quickly. She spotted the disused farmhouse. For a moment she thought she might stop the car and walk the remaining few hundred yards, but she decided against it.

She reasoned to herself: if THRUSH had got on to the scheme and were in the farmhouse waiting, they'll have had her in view almost from the time she moved off the highway. Might as well play it straight

She rushed on and then swung into

a dilapidated farmyard. She switched off the engine. Everything was still and quiet. It was mid-afternoon on a gloriously sunny day. Everything was peaceful.

She got out of the car and walked cautiously round to the back of the house.

She found the back door and, following her instruction, knocked distinctly three times. Then she counted three seconds, and knocked three times again. For a moment there was complete silence; then April heard a movement inside. Instinctively she felt in her skirt pocket; her mini-pistol was there, ready in case of trouble. The door eased open and April stepped inside.

April eyed the woman closely. She was small and dark and spoke in broken English. She seemed timid and frightened; April put it down to the ordeal she must have gone through since being liberated by UNCLE in Europe. But she gave correct answers to April's identification code and within five minutes April was back in her car and hurrying towards Santa Monica, with Madame X by her side.

She drove the car round the back of the hotel, then down to the underground parking lot and she and Madame X took the elevator straight up to the fifth floor.

April put her key in the lock of her room door and the two women stepped inside. April moved over to the picture window and slatted the venetian blind to obscure the view from outside. She switched on a table light. No point in taking chances, she thought to herself.

Almost as she did so there was a movement from the back and from an adjoining shower room stepped Mr. Waverly with a couple of UNCLE agents.

"Good work, Miss Dancer," said Mr. Waverly, UNCLE's top man. "Now . . . where is Madame X?"

April's companion had descended into a large easy chair, and as she got up to present herself, April allowed herself a moment of triumph. "There you are, sir," April said. "Madame X, safe and sound."

"Thank you, Miss Dancer," said Mr. Waverly as he saw Madame X for the first time. "There's just one thing: this is *not* Madame X!"

Waverly's comment crumbled the composure of the almost shock-proof Girl from UNCLE. She sat on a chair arm, went to speak, couldn't find the words to express her utter astonishment, and instead frowned at Waverly.

"Oh, it's all right, Miss Dancer. It's not your fault. You carried out your assignment correctly, but THRUSH must have got on to our plans."

An inquisition of the bogus Madame X followed. It seemed she was an innocent bystander to the UNCLE-THRUSH drama that was going on. All she had been interested in was the two hundred bucks she'd been paid for sitting in an empty farmhouse, giving answers to a couple of questions and travelling back to Santa Monica in a super sports car.

Who'd given her the money?

"Dunno: never saw him before. But it was good money, and easy money, and I couldn't afford to miss it."

It was obvious the woman knew nothing and was no more than an innocent pawn in THRUSH's clever game. As the questioning ended, Mr. Waverly's mini-radio contacter bleeped. "What is it, Mr. Slate?"

"I think I'm on to something, sir. I'm at the fashionable Blue Lagoon roadhouse on the outskirts of town. Can't say more now, but I'll contact you again."

The contact went dead. April smiled and moved quickly as Mr. Waverly told her to make her way to the Blue Lagoon roadhouse. She and Mark Slate had successfully completed many assignments together and, having been duped so thoroughly by THRUSH this time, she was itching to make amends. If Mark was on to something, then she wanted to be on to it, too.

Five miles away, at the Blue Lagoon roadhouse, Mark Slate watched closely as the proprietor, Conrad Jenson, moved among his fashionable clientele. He and Beverley Klein owned the highly successful roadhouse, but the thing that puzzled Mark was their obvious prosperity in spite of the few guests which the roadhouse held at any one time. The rates were high, but not that high.

Could the roadhouse be a cover for some other, more sinister activity? A front for THRUSH, perhaps?

Mark looked around the pleasant scene before him. The weather was splendidly warm and sunny; he was sitting at a swimming-pool side table; around the pool lay bikini-clad girls with their boy friends. Working for UNCLE had its compensations, he thought to himself, as he reached out to take a long, cool drink from the glass which Beverley Klein had sent over for him.

It was cool and sweet . . . perfect for such a hot day. He looked across to see Beverley advancing towards him. She waved, and he gave a little wave in return. But, as he watched her, she seemed to go blurred. Her smile became hazy and indistinct. Could it be . . . ? Was it . . . ?

As Mark tried to get to his feet he realised that someone must have spiked his drink. His legs had no strength or feeling. The happy chatter around the pool faded into the distance and Mark slumped forward across the table in front of him.

"Okay, Conrad," said Beverley Klein quietly. "Let's take him upstairs."

The super-charged speedboat sliced its way through the waves of the bay and headed out to sea. Two THRUSH agents sat in the front; two helpless human bundles were lumped in the back.

April Dancer and Mark Slate, top agents from UNCLE the United Network Command for Law Enforcement were in trouble: serious trouble.

Events had moved swiftly following Mark's blackout. He'd been carried upstairs at the roadhouse and in less than two hours, had been joined by April, in a similar physical state.

April's arrival at the roadhouse had been in no way suspect until Conrad Jenson's senior assistant had spotted her by the swimming pool. He had encountered the devastating April before, when their paths had

crossed during a previous UNCLE-THRUSH shindig . . . and he still remembered the bruises. At the pool he spotted her before she had a chance to see him, and later caught her unawares with a dope capsule, which put her out like a light.

"Can't afford to take chances," decided Beverley Klein. "Better dump them out at sea."

They'd been carried down to the speedboat, bundled in the back and were due to be tipped over the side, once the boat was reasonably clear of the coast.

As the speedboat roared ahead, Mark recovered consciousness. His eyelids flickered open and in the light of late afternoon he could see the still form of April beside him. His hands and feet were securely tied, but he observed that April was not similarly bound. Mark knew why. THRUSH obviously thought that the knock-out drug would still be sufficiently potent when they dropped her over the side for her not to regain consciousness. She would be plunged into the sea and simply drown . . . without ever being able to make a fight for her life.

To save April, Mark knew he must do something . . . and quickly. But what? He was helpless. If only he had more time . . . time for April to regain consciousness. The boat had cleared the bay now and was ploughing through rougher water. Soon it would stop and the pair of them would be tipped over the side.

If Mark made his move now—whatever that move might be—it would only serve to accelerate the actions of the THRUSH agents. He decided to wait for the psychological moment.

"About here?" he heard one of the men say

"A little farther, I think," came the reply. "The headland will give us cover from the coast then. There's still plenty of daylight and we don't want to run the risk of being spotted. It might prove awkward."

Mark blessed the man's reasoning. At least they would have a few more moments. In the tenseness of the situation in which Mark found himself and April, he had no time for thoughts of Madame X and the main purpose of their mission. That would just have to wait. Now it was a desperate case of survival for the intrepid UNCLE agents.

The throttle eased back and the speedboat dropped speed. The motor cut and the boat drifted.

So this was to be it.

Through narrowly closed eyelids Mark could see the two THRUSH thugs advancing towards him. No, they were making first for April. Mark knew he could wait no longer. He must make his move now, or April would be over the side and into the sea.

As they came within range he thrust out his feet with all the power he could summon. With his ankles strapped together, his feet made a devastating piston and the move caught the THRUSH pair completely by surprise. Mark's feet caught the first man low on the chest

and he staggered backwards, crashing into his colleague. Both faltered as Mark scrambled to get to his feet. He was almost up when the first man, recovered from his surprise, countered with a savage blow to the face. Mark went down again, as the boat rocked dangerously from side to side.

"We'll see to him later," spat the second THRUSH man angrily. "Let's get the girl over."

Mark's eyes blazed as they took hold of the limp April. They got her to the edge of the boat, eased her over the side. There was a splash and April was gone.

Mark saw red. He was fond of April, more fond than he would admit even to himself, and if he could have got his hands on this THRUSH twosome he would have killed them there and then, without a moment's hesitation

He was on his feet again and all he could do was to rush them. He put his head down and took a giant leap forward, crashing into them. The three men went down in a heap. Mark could see that one of the THRUSH agents didn't get up and he guessed that the nasty bang he had heard was the man's head coming in contact with the bottom of the boat. He must have been knocked out.

But the other man came towards Mark with his eyes blazing. As Mark tried to regain his feet, a fist crashed into the side of his face. A boot thundered into his side and he felt the pain all over The THRUSH agent was now towering above him. Mark braced himself for the succession of blows he knew must come

He was smote on the right cheek with a heavy blow which cut the skin and, as Mark waited helplessly for the follow up, he thought he saw his attacker crumble. Events had moved so rapidly and he had taken such punishment that he couldn't be sure. Yet he must be right. The blows stopped . . . and, through slit eyelids, Mark Slate looked up to see the attractive form of April Dancer, her clothes soaked, her hair dripping

"Don't look so astonished," smiled the Girl from UNCLE. "Did you think some sea monster had got me?"

As April bent down to untie Mark's bonds, he whispered, "It's good to see you, love. What happened?"

April smiled to herself at Mark's affection, then became the coolly confident April Dancer again. "It was simple, really, Mark. I was almost round from that dope drug before they tipped me over the side. The shock of the water brought me right round, I can tell you. I kept below the surface, and made my way to the other end of the boat. As I climbed aboard I could see our friend about to run you over. Though I say so myself, Mark, the side of my right hand is pretty devastating when applied with force to the side of the neck. Do you want me to go on . . . ?"

Mark smiled his approval as he stretched his stiffened limbs, bringing the circulation back. He staggered over to the controls of the boat and fired the engine.

"What now, Mark?" inquired April.

"Well, my girl," came back Mark. "In case you've forgotten, there's the little business of Madame X to clear up."

As the boat roared into life and Mark headed it back to the shore, April played her trump card.

"Strange you should say that, Mark," she said. "You see I know where the real Madame X is!" April explained: "I wasn't at the roadhouse long, but it was long enough to find out that Madame X—the real Madame X that is—was being held captive by Conrad Jenson and Beverley Klein in the roadhouse."

Mark opened the throttle wide and the speedboat skimmed the surface narrowing the distance between the UNCLE agents and the shore. Soon they were inside the bay and mooring the boat by the landing-stage attached to the roadhouse.

"Lucky it's dusk," remarked April. "We're not so obvious." On the way back, the rope that had held Mark captive had been skilfully used by April to tie up the two THRUSH henchmen, and as April and Mark skipped ashore they were left behind, securely bound and gagged.

"I don't think they'll trouble us," said Mark.

Steadily April and Mark crept up to the roadhouse, and gained entrance through a tradesman's door at the back. The door had been locked, but Mark quickly sprung the lock with his special device and they moved forward, skirting the swimming pool which was now deserted.

The hallway of the roadhouse went straight from front to rear and as April and Mark moved into it from the back door, they heard movement on the stairs. They ducked back

and, peering round until they could just see the foot of the stairs, they saw Jenson and Beverley Klein, with two other men, bundling Madame X down the stairs, through the front doorway and towards a large saloon car. In a moment they were inside.

The engine revved gently and the limousine began to glide away smoothly as Mark flung open the rear door and jumped inside. At the same time April leapt on to the boot of the car

The utter surprise of Mark's unheralded entry into the back of the car kept the THRUSH gang immobile for twenty seconds. Mark needed no longer. In five seconds the knock-out pad, which Mark had produced from his pocket as he leapt into the car, had immobilised one of the THRUSH agents in the rear seat. As the other agent in the passenger seat turned round to grapple with Mark, the UNCLE agent brought his revolver down heavily and Mark saw the man slither down to be propped up by the seat, dashboard and floor.

While this was happening there was a clatter of broken glass as April's boot splintered the rear window. She shattered the remainder, clearing an aperture sufficiently large for her to scramble through. In the front seat sat a frightened Madame X; in the back, Beverley Klein. Conrad Jenson had been driving, but had now stopped the car in order to deal with Mark.

The car, large though it was, seemed full of people and sprawled bodies. April got to grips with Beverley Klein, while Mark dealt with Jenson.

Hampered by the lack of room in the back, April eased back the lock of the door and the two girls went sprawling out on to the roadway. Beverley fought like a tigress, while April tried to get a good judo hold on her.

Jenson, handicapped by the steering wheel, was at a disadvantage and Mark quickly had him begging for mercy. Mark covered him with his gun while they both got out.

"Hold it!" shouted Mark as he saw the two girls still fiercely contested. For a moment Beverley looked to see if Mark had a gun on her. April's right fist, which had already been on its way before Mark yelled, caught her beautifully on the point of the jaw and Beverley dropped to the ground.

April, taking a deep breath, dusted herself down, smoothed her hair and, turning to Mark, said breathlessly: "Just call me champ."

Mark said he thought it somewhat disgraceful that two young and beautiful girls should make such an exhibition of themselves in the drive of a fashionable roadhouse.

But later, in UNCLE headquarters in New York, Mr. Waverly was delighted at April and Mark's performance.

Turning in the direction of April, Mark, and a now more composed Madame X: "Perhaps we should celebrate by having dinner together this evening," he said.

April and Mark smiled at one another and were about to accept graciously when Mr. Waverly walked out of the room . . . with Madame X!

mix and match

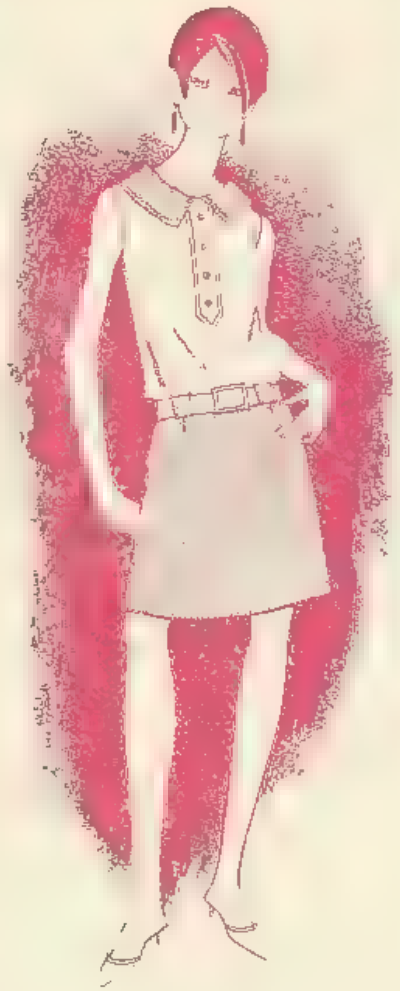
A girl in a hurry—like April Dancer - needs simple, easy-to-wear clothes, interchangeable too. These dresses and separates which we have sketched for you are the answer to April's problems. They could make you feel and look fabulous too. And they're so simple you can make them yourself.

What do you look for when deciding on a new outfit? Obviously you want something fashionable; something that looks smart enough to take you anywhere during the daytime and in the evening too and, above all, it must be comfortable to wear. You want a dress or separates that will 'tub' well; that you can slip into easily and then forget about, leaving you free to concentrate on enjoying life around you, confident in the knowledge that you are looking your best. Nothing is more distressing than a skirt that's too tight, a collar that chokes, or bows and flounces that get in the way while serving no useful purpose at all.

Never before has there been quite such a revolution in teenage clothes as over the past few seasons. The time is ripe for every young girl to experiment with fabrics, styles and colours. Look down any busy thoroughfare. In minutes you will see every colour combination imaginable, colours our grandparents when young would have looked aghast at, but now seen in profusion everywhere—blues and greens teamed, pinks and oranges, mauves and reds.

And what a wonderful selection of fabrics are displayed in the shops: rich crêpes, gay cottons and denims, pastel chiffons, linens in every hue, jewel-coloured corduroys and the marvellous easy-care, man-made fabrics like Terylene, Orlon, Courtelle and Crimplene.

The three styles illustrated have been specially chosen for you because we fee they fit the bill exactly—practical yet pretty too. Two feature the hipster A-line, the other the new, long-bodice-look two-piece with the return of the loose belt. Today's young people are so active and full of 'go' they need to feel free, and these designs achieve this freedom with elegance. Use a litt e imagination with your choice of fabrics and colour and see what can happen to these three basic patterns.



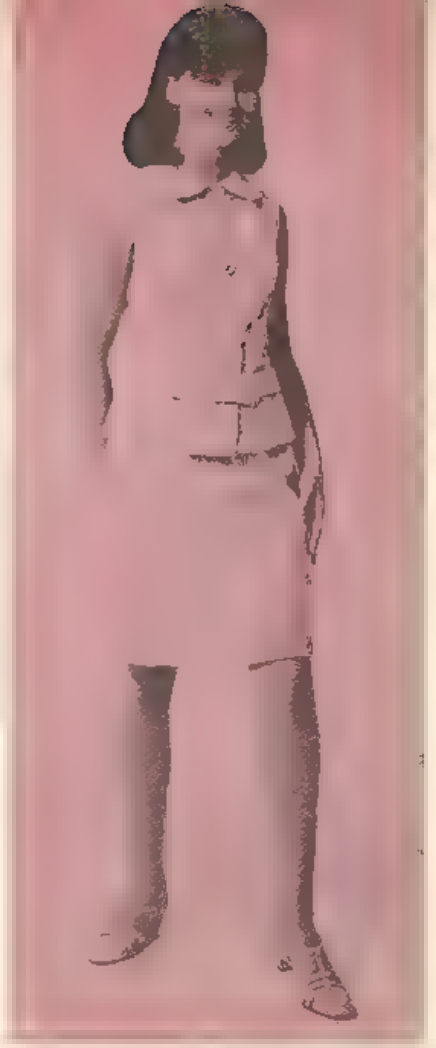
The first style has been designed for Butterick by one of London's top young designers, Mary Quant. It's a semi-fitted A-line dress with a belt at the hipline and contrast collar, short sleeves and belt. For winter you can make this dress in a woollen mixture as in our model. For spring you can choose a lighter fabric and omit the sleeves and co lar.

What do you think of that cheeky little matching hat? Step-by-step instructions and pattern are included with this dress pattern.

Once you have cut out and sewn the basic design and found how simple it is, then you can do many variations in different fabrics and colours. It's a very useful basis for your wardrobe.

Butterick pattern no. 4139. Price in U.K. 5s. Mary Quant dress and hat outfit In Misses' sizes 10, 12, 14, 16. (Bust 31 ins. to 36 ins.) Size 12 with sleeves takes 2¾ yds. of 36 ins material in main colour and 1⅛ yds. of 36 ins. contrasting material. Allow an extra ¼ yd. of fabric for the hat.

Butterick pattern no. 3867. Price in U.K. 4s. 6d. Blouse, skirt, pants and kerchief. In Misses' sizes 10, 12, 14, 16. (Bust 31 ins. to 36 ins.) Size 12, modelled above, takes 1⅝ yds. of 36 ins. fabric for the blouse and belt, ½ yd. for the contrast collar and bands and 1¾ yds. of 36 ins. fabric for the skirt. All measurements and yardage for the alternative garments are listed on the pattern envelope itself



Butterick pattern no. 4311. Price in U.K. 4s. 6d. Suit. Semi-fitted jacket with rolled shaped collar and loose-fitting contour belt. With or without sleeves. Straight skirt. In Teen sizes 10T, 12T, 14T, 16T. (Bust 30 ins. to 36 ins.) Size 12T takes 3¾ yds. of 36 in. width for sleeveless version; 4¼ yds. with sleeves.

TO RELAX IN

After school hours and at weekends, relax in mix and match separates.

Make this outfit in easy stages. Begin with the blouse and ring the changes with the A-line hipster skirt and the ankle-length, bell-bottomed hipster pants. Add a pert, triangular kerchief and you will look as chirpy as a robin and feel just as bright. The tab front blouse can be made with roomy roll-up sleeves or sleeveless, as the one our model is wearing. From this one pattern you can make four individual garments. Yardage and measurements are given separately for each item. Team up the pants and skirt with other sweaters and tops and you'll soon have an extensive interchangeable wardrobe.

If you've never tried your hand at home dressmaking before, these styles are very straightforward to follow, and with every Butterick pattern comes a useful cutting and sewing guide with easy step-by-step instructions, clearly illustrated with diagrams. Each pattern number quoted here is available from your local Butterick stockist and from most major fabric shops and city stores.

So far we've selected a dress and casual separates for you. Now to complete your basic wardrobe we suggest a little light-weight suit, one hat you can adapt to your own requirements. Make it sleeveless in one of the pretty pastel print linens and it will do you good service as a dress to wear under your winter coat. To be doubly serviceable, you can team the skirt with any dainty self-coloured blouses you may already have in your wardrobe. Add full-length sleeves and a warmer fabric like fine wool or corduroy and you have a trim suit to take you right through to April.

Choose your accessories with extra care and you will look as though you have just stepped out of the pages of a glossy fashion magazine.

WAR DRUMS

THE Land Rover rolled, crawled and skidded along the rough African track. In spite of its four-wheeled drive and its well-treaded tyres, the going was difficult. Many other cars would have ground to a halt, many miles back in Kenya, probably with their chassis broken as the result of such arduous treatment. Only a tank could have done better.

April Dancer, the attractive young driver, mopped her forehead with her neckerchief. She re-engaged the clutch and lurched on in bottom gear. She was about to strike camp when she saw, beyond a clump of acacia bushes, a rope bridge which spanned the river gorge. This was the first indication of human habitation she had seen for the past twelve days. She drove on for another fifty yards, which took her eight minutes, and sheltered in the shadows of a clump of twisted ebonies. She switched off the ignition, and heard the bubbling of the water in the radiator. Even the Land Rover could not take this punishment indefinitely

Although she loved nature, April found the wilderness of this countryside eerie. She pressed a switch on the radio transmitter set in the vehicle's dashboard. Whilst waiting for a reply, she wiped her face and oiled it with suntan lotion. It made her feel a little more civilised.

"Is that you, April?" It was Mark Slate's voice on the radio. "Mark here."

April looked up to the mountain peak where Mark would be spying out the land, searching, as she was, for any signs of human life.

"Listen, Mark, I've found a rope bridge spanning a river gorge. If I wait here long enough, somebody is sure to come along sooner or later."

"Good girl. I can't see a soul from

the top of this mountain, not even a wisp of smoke. I'll come down and join you. I should be with you in three hours."

"Okay, Mark."

"Keep well out of sight until I contact you. Don't interfere with the natives on any condition and keep your automatic ready. Remember what they did to the last UNCLE agents."

"You're an old woman, Mark. Remember I was sent on this mission to find out what is happening to the arms which have been smuggled into this area, and I won't find that out by hiding in the bushes. Besides, I don't want to antagonise them by carrying a gun."

"You'll be the death of me, April. I should never have left you in the first place. Just keep out of sight. I'll be with you in three hours."

"I'll have the kettle boiling." April switched off her transmitter.

The stillness was frightening. April decided to make a can of tea to calm her nerves. As she unloaded her primus stove from the back of the Land Rover, she turned over the job in her mind. UNCLE headquarters had been informed that a consignment of rifles had been illegally taken across the borders of Kenya into the north-east Congo. How many more arms had been shipped to the same area was anyone's guess; but one thing was certain: African tribes do not acquire arms without having the intention of using them. It was therefore feared that a rebellion was about to break out which could involve the whole of central Africa. UNCLE immediately sent two agents to investigate. They were discovered in a canoe, three hundred miles down the River Congo, by a missionary. They had been bayoneted.

April put a match to her primus stove. She had been sent to this part of the Congo to finish the job her comrades had died attempting to do. It was felt that a lady travelling alone would not arouse the suspicions of the rebels; although that remained to be seen. Anyway, Mark Slate was close by in the jungle, ready to step in should she need his assistance.

April put a canteen of water on the stove and decided to refill her water containers from the river. She could only carry one container at a time, as the climb down the rocks to the river was almost vertical. But she climbed leisurely; she was not pressed for time.

The water at this point was clean. As she let the water gush into the container opening, the thought came to April that the other UNCLE agents must have met their ends close to this spot.

She was half-way up the rocky bank again when she heard deep, male voices singing an African tribal chant. Along a path running along the opposite bank, appeared a score of men. Some wore army pattern boots and gaiters. Some were barefooted. Some wore khaki cotton shorts and shirts. Others wore dirty white singlets or grass skirts. All wore steel helmets. All carried rifles and bayonets.

The line of warriors swung on to the narrow rope bridge. In front, leading the chanting as well as the troops, was the sergeant, his rank shown by the three white stripes on his khaki shirt.

He had almost crossed the bridge when he saw April's face just below. He stopped so suddenly that his troops bunched into him. It was the perfect setting for an ambush.

"Take cover, take cover," yelled the sergeant, turning about.

The rope bridge swung wildly as the men tried to retrace their steps. The sergeant slipped and for a moment hung precariously. Another warrior fell into the river. The screaming and shouting quickly whipped up a sense of panic. The sergeant slipped off the rope and fell, with a thud, fifteen feet on to the rugged rocks below.

Automatically, April dropped her

container and climbed down to his assistance.

Blood flowed from a four-inch gash in the sergeant's leg staining the yellow limestone rocks. April tore a strip off the man's trouser leg, dipped it in the cold water and washed the wound. By this time, the other warriors had realised that this was not an ambush; they crept up in twos and threes to their sergeant.

"Get me my first-aid box from the car," ordered April. "It's white and has a red cross on the lid."

The African soldier hesitated.

"Quickly," said April firmly. "Do you want this man to die?"

"No, bwana," said the tribesman, quickly climbing up the bank to the vehicle.

April cleaned and bandaged the man's wound. It was not at all serious, nevertheless she realised that this accident enabled her to gain the confidence of the Africans, at least for the time being. As long as she could play the part of a nurse, she was not likely to be regarded as an enemy of the tribe.

"You four," she said, pointing to the nearest burly soldiers. "Lift your sergeant gently into my car."

The Africans raised their wounded comrade.

"Be very careful. This man is very sick."

"Yes, ah am ver' sick," said the sergeant.

April attended the man as if he was seriously injured. Under her commands, he was gently raised to the track and loaded on to a berth in the back of the van. The soldiers threw their rifles on the floor, and as many of them as could, hung on to the vehicle. The remainder pushed the Land Rover over the larger rocks in the road, or released it when it stuck in the mud.

"Which way now to your village?" asked April, finding it difficult to distinguish the track from the wild countryside.

"Along this road," directed her African companion.

April shrugged her shoulders and drove on. It was all the same to her.

The African village was fortified with a wall of stout stakes. Armed soldiers guarded the main gate, which was opened at the approach of the vehicle and the yelling passengers. Without hesitation, April drove through the gate and stopped in the central clearing. Here was another squad of about twenty soldiers, in three ranks, practising arms drill. April ignored them, jumping out of the vehicle to supervise the lowering of the tailboard and the handling of the wounded man.

"What is the meaning of this tumult?"

The Africans froze to attention as the deep voice thundered across the clearing.

April glanced over her shoulder to see an impressive commander cross the clearing. He wore a complete military uniform, including an officer's cap and the red lapel flashes of a commander of field rank. In his hands he carried a baton. April turned back to her duties.

"I thought I told you to lower the tailboard?" she said to a trooper, who had pulled himself up to attention.

"Come here, white woman," ordered the African commander.

April realised that she had stumbled on to something big. Here she was before the supreme commander himself. She tried not to show her anxiety.

"I have an injured man to attend to, if you don't mind," she said, turning away.

"I said come here."

April did not like the man's tone of voice. She turned on him angrily, "I hope I don't have to remind you of your manners. That is no way to speak to a lady."

A rifle butt, smashed between her shoulder blades, sent her sprawling in the dirt before the commander. She looked up at his polished boots.

"When General Ironsides gives an order, it is to be obeyed, do you understand?"

Two burly Africans pulled her on to her feet.

"Ironsides?" mocked April. "Where did you get a name like that?"

The general ignored the remark. "We kill all intruders in our territory."

April shuddered as she remembered the fate of the murdered agents. "How?" she asked. "By eating them?"

"Not now. They are shot in a civilised manner."

"Or bayoneted?"

"Sometimes. It has to be done. We can no longer trust outsiders. It is our law that all intruders are to be exterminated. As a soldier, I do not make these laws, I only carry them out. I will arrange for your execution before sundown."

"I call that barbaric. Now, if you don't mind, before you exterminate me I'd like to attend to my patient."

She walked away. This time the general did not oppose her. He walked behind her, noting everything she did.

"I want a hut to use as a temporary sick-bay, and plenty of hot water. This man urgently needs his dressings changed."

The general raised his finger and a subordinate scurried away to arrange the medical facilities. April had the injured sergeant laid out in the hut and, with great ceremony, she carefully removed his bandages, bathed and applied a mixture of ointments to the wound, and redressed it with a clean bandage. All this the general noted.

"It is done," said April gravely. "I will return to change the dressings tonight." April hoped she had impressed the general.

The general shook his head. "I cannot postpone your execution. We go to war tonight. Come with me," he added as an afterthought, "I have another sick patient for you." He led her across the clearing. "Let me warn you, however, that your sentence has not been remitted."

They entered a hut. On a bed of straw on the floor lay a young man. April knelt beside him.

"What is wrong with him?"

"He is very sick," said the general.

April examined the man, including his eyes, mouth and ears, but she saw no symptoms of any illness. The man was obviously exhausted, but she could not even guess at the disease which sapped the life out of him. April was worried; she hoped she could cure the man and thereby win the general's confidence. But, for once, she doubted her own ability.

"What happened?"

"It was the Samatu tribe. One of their warriors speared his shadow. Now he is going to die. But this time we, the Mabitsais, will have our revenge."

"What did you say first?" asked April, hardly believing her ears. "Did you say 'speared his shadow'?"

"Yes," the general smashed his baton on the wall. "This hunter was stalking an antelope when the Samatu warrior crept up behind him and stuck a spear in his shadow."

"But what harm would that do? That won't kill this man."

"It will. The Samatu have done this before to two of our warriors. They died, as this man is dying, before the new moon."

"But that's a lot of superstitious nonsense."

The general turned on her, his eyes glaring angrily. "It may be nonsense in your country, but it is not nonsense in our country. You do not know our ways."

April pulled a bottle of castor oil from her first-aid box.

"This man will live," she said.

She gave the young warrior a spoonful of the oil. The sick man made no attempt to swallow the medicine. It spilled out of the side of his mouth and ran down his cheek.

"You see! This man is doomed, but he will be revenged tonight. Tonight the Samatu will be destroyed. I have forty men under my command, all armed and well trained. There will be no Samatu tomorrow. Now I will have no more of this white man's magic. Prepare for your execution. I have wasted enough of my time already."

"Wait!"

April, playing for time, corked the castor oil bottle, and returned it and the spoon to the first-aid box. Undoubtedly, the general meant business. She could not hope to convince him that his superstitions, ridiculous as they were, were nonsensical. Suddenly she noticed, in the box, her pair of surgical scissors. She slipped them out, and before the general could stop her, she fell on her knees and drove the scissor blades into the earth, right in the general's shadow.

The general stiffened and let out a

faint cry. His legs buckled and he collapsed on the ground.

"Now you will die," she told him.

The general tried to call out, but was unable to do so. Incredible as it seemed to April, the general reared on the beliefs of his tribe—thought he was about to die. So strongly did he believe this superstition that he had completely lost all hope and will to live. Under this hypnotical belief he would slowly waste away, as was happening to the young hunter on the straw bed. Such was the power of African superstitions.

April bent over the general. "Can you hear me?" she asked.

The general, stiff with terror, nodded.

"I can save you, with white man's magic."

April stepped outside the hut into the bright sunshine and called four soldiers.

"Your commander is sick. Bring him and the other sick man outside. I will cure them."

"Yes, bwana."

The soldiers brought out their general and the young man. April had them propped on their feet, supported between the soldiers in the middle of the clearing. Other villagers gathered round to watch.

April had decided on a plan: she would put on a display of magic. Only in that way could she combat their superstition.

From her Land Rover, she took out a distress signal flare, unscrewed the top and pulled the firing-pin. A red flare shot forty feet into the air. A second flare followed.

The villagers groaned and shuffled uneasily on their feet. Next, April took a spare can of petrol and poured the fuel on the shadows of the young hunter and the general. She recited as much of Longfellow's poem Hiawatha as she could remember, which was quite a lot, dramatising her words with her own version of the movements of an Indian war dance. The villagers watched in petrified silence. Finally, when she was almost exhausted, April put a flame to the petrol-soaked earth. The little fires burnt into the shadows of the psychologically sick men.

After the flames faded out, April said: "Mabitai warrior, General Ironsides, you are sick no more."

She dismissed the soldiers. The young hunter and the general rose shakily on their feet.

"Now you are cured. Walk to me."

The general staggered forward and the young man followed him.

"Drink and regain your strength."

Slowly the two men realised that they were not going to die. They drank a little and ate a little. Their strength returned.

"Now," said April. "Your tribe is immune from the spells of the Samatus. However, should you attempt to make war, the wind will let me know, and I will be angry. I will make your bodies be consumed by the fire you saw burning on your shadows. Do you understand?"

The general nodded.

"Then command your men to collect their weapons and destroy them."

"Corporal Rakita," said the general. His corporal saluted. "File the arms together and burn them."

"Yes sir." The corporal saluted.

"Now you will have many years of prosperity," said April. "Celebrate with a feast."

That night, with the sound of African festive songs ringing in her ears, April drove away.

There would be no native uprising in Africa that year. April was pleased with herself; she had prevented a tribal war which, to her, was as important as any central African revolution. The child-like innocence of this African tribe touched her, she was happy that she had prevented some

bloodshed among them. The radio receiver buzzed in her dashboard.

"Hello, April. Come in please," said Mark's voice.

"Go ahead, Mark."

"Where have you been? I've been trying to contact you for hours. Are you all right?"

"Fine, thanks."

"Listen, UNCLE headquarters have learnt that the arms were sent to a General Ironsides, who is raising an army in Africa."

"An army of forty tribesmen. Don't worry Mark. It disbanded peacefully two hours ago."

"Disbanded?"

April smiled. "Yes, disbanded Meet me at the rope bridge and I'll tell you all about it."

April switched off her radio.

She did not mind the rough African tracks now. The full moon was out bathing the continent in its pale blue light. It was peaceful in Africa that night.

FOR TRAVELLING GIRLS

As a girl agent continuously on the move, April always keeps two suitcases packed: one full of summery dresses and beachwear and the other containing the thick sweaters and furs she might need on an Arctic expedition. A girl from U.N.C.L.E. must be prepared to set off within minutes for any quarter of the globe.

April finds too that a girl agent must travel light, with crease-resisting clothes that take little space in a suitcase. That's why these travel slippers in their own flat case appealed to April.

Why not make some for yourself? They're so neat you can carry them in a handbag. Mules and case complete cost less than ten shillings and they're quite simple to make.

You will need ½ yard of 48-inch-wide quilted plastic, available from most large stores. Exact amount varies with size of slipper but ½ yard should be ample for all sizes, including adults, with some to spare. Buy the thinner quality as this is much easier to work and is softer to wear. To check how much you need, cut yourself a paper pattern first. If you have small feet, you will probably only need ¼ yard. You will also need ¼ yard contrasting plastic curtaining for binding, scissors, tape measure, pencil, paper for pattern-making, needle, thread, adhesive, paper clips for holding pieces together while sewing or gluing: too many holes will weaken the plastic.

Make a paper pattern of the sole, by placing your foot on a sheet of paper, and drawing round it. For the uppers, measure the top of the foot at its broadest part—over the instep, near the beginning of the toes—and draw the upper in the shape we show here but to your own measurement. Place the pattern on the plastic. As the material is thin, cut two sole pieces for each foot. Cut one right foot, turn over the pattern and cut the underside. Do the same for the left foot. Cut out two uppers, both the same: it's not necessary to make these double thickness.

Pin the upper to one sole with paper clips at either side and slip your foot in to fit. At this stage make any adjustments carefully; it is better to trim off too little than too much. When it fits comfortably, unpin the upper from the sole and bind it at each end, using a ¼-inch strip of contrasting curtain plastic. The sides are not bound.

Place the sole and underside of right foot together and stick with adhesive or a few random tacking stitches round the edges. Cut ¼-inch-wide contrasting strip long enough to run right round sole edge. Position the upper on the double sole and clip in place. Tack the binding round the edge, easing it round heel and toe and taking in the upper as you work. Sew firmly in place by machine or hand, making sure that the needle goes right through to the other side so that both edges are caught down. Neatly trim away any edging protruding too far beyond your stitching line.

Repeat these instructions to make the left slipper.

WALLET

The flap of the wallet can be any shape, you need not follow our pattern. You may wish to make up your own flap design and give your wallet a novel finish.

We suggest you cut out a paper pattern first to fit your size of slippers. The exact dimensions of the wallet will vary, some feet are long and narrow, others short and broad. As a guide, fold your slippers, measure the length, double this and add 4 inches for the flap-over: length of strip to be cut approx. 16 inches long by 5 inches wide.

Neatly hem bottom of strip and fold double, leaving 4 inches of single fabric showing for the flap-over. Bind the sides of the wallet to match the slippers, and also the top edge. The flap will lie flat when folded down but, if you prefer, when sewing the side binding, you may catch in an additional bound strip across the front, under which the flap can be tucked.

SUPPER WITH APRIL

A girl from UNCLE must always be prepared for guests. Sometimes they are THRUSH agents, and April quickly disposes of them. But visiting friends must be fed and a clever agent is always prepared for such an emergency, her larder stocked with tins and frozen foods which can be quickly dressed up into exciting snacks.

Here are some of April's favourite 'quickies'!

SOUP À LA DANCER

Piping hot Heinz Cream of Tomato Soup, garnished with parsley, with hot jacket potatoes and slices of Cheddar cheese.

RASPBERRY MERINGUE SPONGE

1 Birds Eye Dairy Cream Sponge
1 (8-oz.) packet Tempo Raspberries, thawed
2 egg-whites
4 oz. castor sugar

Serves 6 portions

Pre-heat the oven to Gas Mark 9 or 500° F. Place the cake on an ovenproof dish, remove the top sponge round from the cake. Arrange the raspberries on the cream and sprinkle on a little sugar, replace the top sponge on to the fruit. Whisk the egg-whites until stiff and fold in the sugar. Spread over the top and sides of the sponge, dredge with castor sugar and bake for 2–3 minutes.

CHEESEBURGERS

1 packet (4) frozen Hamburgers
Rabbit Mixture:
1 oz. butter
1 level teaspoon made mustard
Pinch salt and cayenne pepper
6 oz. grated Cheddar cheese
2 tablespoons milk
4 hamburger buns

4 servings

Grill the hamburgers 2 or 3 minutes on each side and keep warm.

To prepare the Rabbit mixture: Cream the butter with the seasonings, add grated cheese and milk and mix well. Spread a generous helping of the Rabbit mixture over both sides of each split hamburger bun and grill to a golden-brown. Close the buns and slip a cooked hamburger inside each. Serve hot with mustard or ketchup.

To make it even easier, leave out the hamburger mixture. You then have a Welsh Rabbit bun.

The Way to Mark's Heart

Next stop London, San Francisco, Moscow? An agent's life is fast, exciting and, of course, dangerous. It's also full of missed meals. So—whenever they aren't flying off to Timbuktu, catching a train to San Fernando or trailing a THRUSH agent through the Venetian canals—April takes time off to cook a nourishing, mouth-watering supper for her fellow-agent. She knows how to keep the man happy—well, try these recipes for yourself!

HARVEST SUPPER

½ oz. lard
1 medium onion—chopped
1 lb. stewing steak—minced
¼ lb. mushrooms—sliced
4 tablespoons Heinz Tomato Ketchup
Heinz Worcestershire Sauce
Salt and pepper
2 lb. potatoes—prepared
2 oz. cheese—grated
2 (16-oz.) cans Heinz Baked Beans in Tomato Sauce

Serves 4.

Cook the onion in the lard until tender but not brown. Add the meat and cook for 10 minutes, then add the mushrooms and cook for another two minutes. Cut the potatoes into ¼-inch slices, bring to the boil in salted water and drain immediately. Add the tomato ketchup and a good dash of Worcestershire sauce to the meat mixture and season to taste.

Arrange alternate layers of meat and potato in an ovenproof dish or casserole, finishing with a layer of potato.

Sprinkle with the cheese and cook in a moderately hot oven, Electricity 400°F or Gas No. 6, for 30 minutes.

Turn the baked beans into an ovenproof dish, cover and place in the oven with the pie.

POACHED EGG SURPRISE

1 (15-oz.) can peach halves
1 Birds Eye Arctic Roll
¼ pint double cream, whipped

Serves 5 portions.

Strain the syrup from the peaches into a small saucepan and reduce rapidly by half. Cut the sponge roll into 5 slices and arrange on a flat dish. Place a peach half on each and brush with the syrup. Pipe or fork cream round the edge of each peach. Serve at once.

THE GIRL FROM

U.N.C.L.E.

PROJECT

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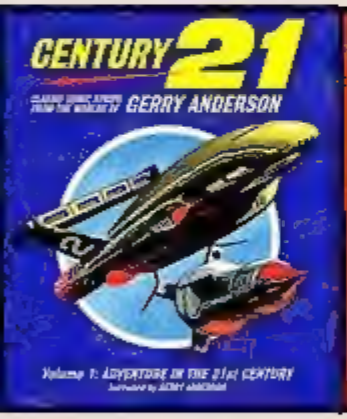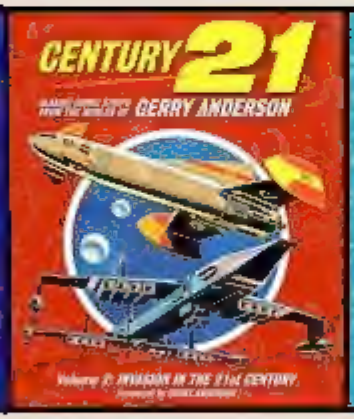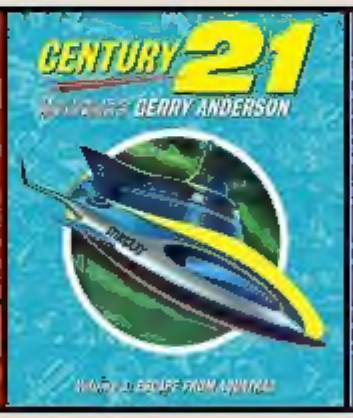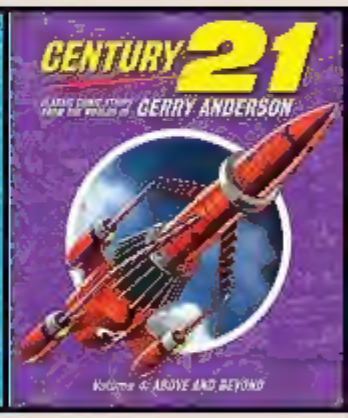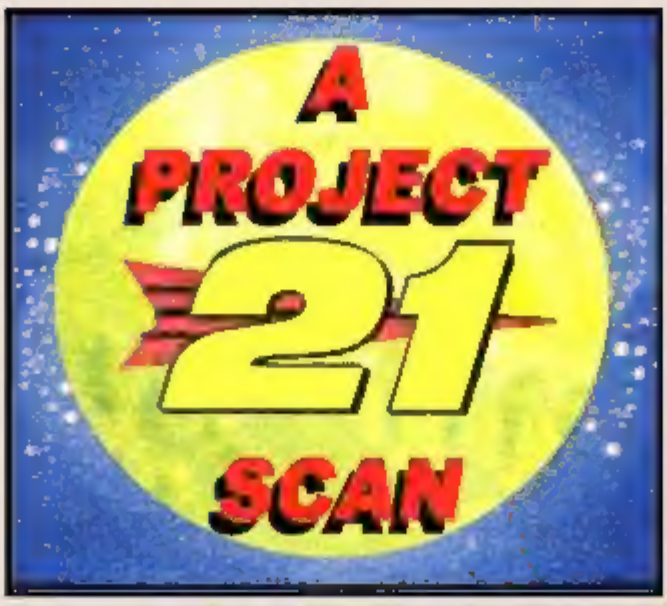
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